

# LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

Fifth Series, }  
Volume II. }

No. 1515.—June 21, 1873.

{ From Beginning,  
{ Vol. CXVII.

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PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY BY  
LITTELL & GAY, BOSTON.

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## BEAUTIFUL HANDS.

SUCH beautiful, beautiful hands!  
 They're neither white nor small,  
 And you, I know, would scarcely think  
 That they were fair at all.  
 I've looked on hands whose form and hue  
 A sculptor's dream might be,  
 Yet are these aged, wrinkled hands  
 Most beautiful to me.

Such beautiful, beautiful hands!  
 Though heart were weary and sad,  
 These patient hands kept toiling on  
 That children might be glad.  
 I almost weep, as looking back  
 To childhood's distant day,  
 I think how these hands rested not,  
 When mine were at their play.

But oh! beyond this shadow land —  
 Where all is bright and fair,  
 I know full well those dear old hands  
 Will palms of victory bear;  
 Where crystal streams, through endless time,  
 Flow over golden sands,  
 And where the old grow young again,  
 I'll clasp my mother's hands.

## ECHO.

COME to me in the silence of the night;  
 Come in the speaking silence of a dream;  
 Come with soft rounded cheeks and eyes as  
 bright  
 As sunlight on a stream;  
 Come back in tears  
 O memory, hope, love of finished years.

O dream, how sweet, too sweet, too bitter  
 sweet,  
 Whose wakening should have been in Para-  
 dise,  
 Where souls brimful of love abide and meet;  
 Where thirsting longing eyes  
 Watch the slow door  
 That opening, lets in, lets out no more.

Yet come to me in dreams that I may live  
 My very life again, though cold in death;  
 Come back to me in dreams that I may give  
 Pulse for pulse, breath for breath:  
 Speak low, lean low,  
 As long ago, my love, how long ago!

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI.

## HOPE DEFERRED.

A DEARINESS came o'er me  
 Once, on a dim spring day;  
 The summer on before me  
 Seemed far and far away.  
 Full dark had reigned the winter,  
 With cloud, and mist and gloom;

My spirit longed to enter  
 Into the fields of bloom.

The tempest's wild repining,  
 Made sorrow in my soul;  
 I craved the cheerful shining  
 When heavy clouds unroll.

I saw a gleam on heather,  
 Stray through a rifted cloud;  
 The masses swept together,  
 The winds spoke fierce and loud.

The mist upon the mountain  
 Dropped down in hopeless rain;  
 Fell in a bitter fountain  
 Over the grieving plain.

All The Year Round.

## SONNET.—LOVE FOR THE YOUNG.

NOT only for yourselves, but for the years  
 Which you, not knowing, bring to me anew,  
 Are you so dear that I consider you  
 With this persistency of quiet tears;  
 For many silent tows are in your speech,  
 And dead hopes rise and tremble when you  
 smile,  
 Making me fancy for a little while  
 That hands I cannot clasp are in my reach;  
 And my soul cries, "What can I do or bear"  
 (I that have lost so much and wept so long)  
 "How make myself your servant, to re-  
 move  
 The sting and weight of that remembered  
 Love  
 Which was my joy, but may have had some  
 wrong  
 From slights unknown, ere Time had taught  
 me care!"

Good Words.

M. B. SMEDLEY.

WELCOME Thy gentle scourge, Thou precious  
 Lord;  
 Small are the cords Thy love hath inter-  
 twined,  
 And light the stroke. I own Thy just award  
 Of stripes, when in Thy temple Thou dost  
 find  
 Unmeet intruders, traffickers abhorred,  
 That grieve Thy loving Spirit's gracious  
 mind,  
 Making the holy place where Thou should'st  
 reign  
 Alone a den of earthliness again.

Thou wilt destroy this temple; for within  
 A fretting leprosy is on the walls,  
 Nor can the plague-spot of indwelling sin  
 Be purified, until the fabric falls;  
 And though at times to feel Thy work begin  
 Dismays the sinking flesh, yet faith recalls  
 The blessed hope, that, as Thy word is true,  
 Thou wilt return and build it up anew.

From The Quarterly Review.

THE STATE OF ENGLISH PAINTING.\*

THE announcement at a Royal Academy dinner that large sums of money are given for pictures is no evidence that Art is flourishing among us. When one or two thousand pounds are paid for a Chelsea vase, we need not assume that similar sums given for paintings by popular artists indicate anything more than abundant wealth and corresponding vanity. The price set upon a picture by art-traders and in the sale-room, has, in nine cases out of ten, nothing whatever to do with the real value of the work. The whims of individuals, the despotism of fashion, the catchword of the frivolous and ignorant, often carry a temporary influence with them, before the deliberative judgment of the thoughtful has been able to come to a definite conclusion. But he who neither bounds his horizon by the motives of the moment, nor shares the unreflecting prejudices of his time, will take a broader view. He will be little disposed to submit to the unquestioning tyranny of the present, but casting his eye over the whole kingdom of Art he will contrast the capabilities and powers that it displayed in the past with the aimless waywardness and trivial self-seeking that characterize its dissipated efforts now. The astute and judicious lover of Art for its own sake will follow quite another lead than that of an illusory prestige in gratifying his æsthetic tastes. He will look patiently and closely to the genuine qualities of what he selects; choosing that which suits his own temperament and sympathies, without reference to the false touchstone of popularity; and though unknown out of his circle as an art-patron, he may find ultimately that, in surrounding himself with artistic work thus carefully and independently chosen, he will have ob-

tained something more and better than that which the pretentious canvases of show-painters bring to the walls of those millionaires who invest their superfluous thousands in them. Perhaps we should hardly go beyond the truth in saying that scarcely one of the ambitious collectors who crowd their dining-rooms and drawing rooms with pictures selected from a fashionable and materialistic point of view, would be found willing to give five pounds for a picture by Titian or Tintoretto not inscribed with his name or otherwise externally authenticated. It is difficult to make such "patrons" understand that the buying of a name is not the buying of a picture; and that a genuine work of art has quite another kind of value than that of a Dutch tulip or a piece of Dresden china. This vulgar and commercial Macenism is the bane of art; it gives fictitious money-value to bad work, and by ill-judged expenditure robs the true artist of his merited reward. It exorbitantly raises the commercial value of the work of fashionable favourites, and depresses that of all others, however worthy it may be. Its tendency is to develop shallow sentiment, and by a clever meretricious execution—a mere facility of representation—to supersede artistic dignity and genuine seriousness of aim and purpose.

For these and other reasons which we shall examine, we find our English Art in so depressed a state as to suggest the inquiry if we have Art at all existing as a school among us. The epic spirit certainly has left our canvases, the idyllic too has vanished, and in their stead we find merely clever imitations in detail of nature, analytic studies, infinite variety of material means; but of the spirit that could bring these into contact with the highest sentiments and feelings, we have nothing left. The dramatic idealism and concentration of Hogarth; the imaginative grace of Reynolds and Gainsborough; the picturesque diffusiveness of rustic Morland; the scenic breadth of plain, downright John Crome; the suffused tenderness and poetic glow of Richard Wilson; the idyllic simplicity and sweetness of Stothard; the glory of the

\* 1. *The Exhibition of the Royal Academy of Arts.* London, 1872.

2. *A Descriptive Handbook for the Pictures in the House of Parliament.* By T. J. Cullick. London, 1866.

3. *Descriptive and Historical Catalogue of the Pictures of the National Gallery, with Biographical Notes of the Painters.* By R. N. Wornum. London, 1872.

4. *Catalogo degli Oggetti d'Arte esposti al Pubblico nella R. Accademia di Belle Arti in Venezia.* Venezia, 1872.

early Turner, are all passed away. These things are as far above the mere vulgar imitation of nature and the dexterous painting of draperies or flesh, as the dramatic scenes and characters of Shakespeare or of Scott transcend the dull routine of ordinary life. Our recent pictures are of an entirely different class. Compare the huge masses of raw white, the hard lines, the bald literalisms of some of our most celebrated modern paintings, with the diffused tone, the eclectic consistency, the intellectual ease and refinement, the thoroughly-felt and well-balanced values, both æsthetic and materialistic, of Reynolds and Gainsborough. In our modern pictures we have a heterogeneous network of lights and shadows, a dispersion of colour utterly without centrality, and perplexing alike to the eye and the mind. All arrangement is lost, and there is no more trace of mental effort, of the exercise of the art-function, than is mechanically displayed by the lens of the photographer. A noble, thoughtful style, broad and vigorous views, healthy and natural motive, united with wholesome moral meaning, have given place to mere cleverness of touch and slavish imitations of nature.

One of the chief causes of our present shortcomings is undoubtedly the nature of the Art education prosecuted at the Government schools of Art throughout the kingdom. Of course drawing, as a piece of general education, or as an universal "accomplishment," is entirely distinct from the art of expressing individual ideas and sentiments in a picturesque manner. This cannot be taught, and can only be directed. We must not therefore expect too much from these useful, but far from perfect institutions. But while all are taught the use of lines and the elements of form, there is no reason why instruction should not be given in those forms and those lines which contain an artistic idea. At present this is by no means the case. The endless use of geometric examples in the "flat" (geometric, at least, in a more or less modified form), the absolute indifference to anything like an artistic sentiment, and the complete slavery to a mere photographic

correctness in the studies from both the "flat" and the "round," though not wholly reprehensible in themselves (having, in fact, something to be said for them), are yet parts of an erroneous method, and are highly detrimental to the future destiny of the true artist. We must, nevertheless, protest unreservedly against one element of the teaching pursued in these schools, which allows an unlimited repetition of similar forms within the same piece of design, supposed to be "ornamental." A number of geometric or conventional figures are constructed; they are then reversed to fill up a corresponding portion of the allotted space, and the result is called "ornamental design," though without any of that vitality of principle which in dealing with decorative forms strives to make them subservient to some ruling idea or mental plan which can alone confer a right to the title, and have the power to please the eye and satisfy the mind from a right point of view. This mode of training is almost sure to be disadvantageous to those students who should afterwards extend their practice to the painting of pictures, as their works must naturally exhibit traces of it in a formality of arrangement and distribution quite as fatal to the spirit of Art in the one case as the other.

A singular instance of the correction of repetition, and at the same time protest against its use, occurs on the façade of a small church at Pistoia, across which runs a simple stone moulding, consisting, with a slight exception, of repeated forms. The artist has been well aware that if his ornament had been allowed to repeat itself punctually throughout its whole course, a single glance at the first of its component elements would have sufficed the spectator; but, wishing his moulding to be more particularly examined, he has sculptured a symbolical eagle quite out of character with the rest of his design about one-third of the distance across; consequently when the eye falls upon this it is at once arrested and is compelled to make a careful examination of the remainder, if only to ascertain if there are more irregularities. One, however, has been sufficient. It has caused a careful



and thorough examination of the whole piece of workmanship, and it is quite beautiful enough to preclude disappointment, which is all the artist desired. A lesson like this in its full instruction, could only come out of an artistic mind capable of finding a remedy for every evil. Such an expedient would have no significance in our day, and would be sufficient to condemn the work of the most hopeful pupil or developed artist, if it ever occurred to him and he should have the hardihood to adopt it.

Another hindrance to the progress of true Art is the tone of modern criticism. For every other faculty or function an education is supposed to be required; for that of art-critic none is exacted. Without any attempt to ascertain the æsthetic laws and principles by a process of induction from universally accepted standards, only to be gained by long courses of study and observation, we continually find personal opinions thrust forward as the statutes and canons of judgment, without regard to any central principle whatever, as if, indeed, no such thing existed. It is true that a thing may be good or bad according to the point of view taken; but that does not annul the fact that nevertheless there is something undoubtedly good and something undoubtedly bad. For example, it is a sound and established certainty that the Venetians, at their good time, painted on the whole good pictures, and that the Bolognese on the whole, at all times, painted very bad pictures. From the highest point of view—the point of view which refers all works of Art to a central artistic principle, not only dwelling in the eye but rooted in the mind—there is no more doubts as to what is a good painting or a bad painting than there is as to whether a piece of glass be dim or transparent. All men do not love apples or potatoes, but the common judgment, and undoubtedly the true one, accounts them both good and wholesome. The same thing holds true of works of Art. Their intrinsic value is not a matter of supposition or personal opinion at all, but a matter of fact, to be ascertained from an application of rules and principles not the less

solid and certain because they are difficult to express or explain. Modern criticism, for the most part, not only avoids the trouble and repudiates the necessity of mastering these principles, but actually denies their existence altogether; and, as every one can see if a line be crooked or straight, and perceive if a colour be deeper or paler or different from that which is found in nature, criticism is confined to these qualities alone, the ulterior object of all lines and colour in painting being entirely overlooked. Under such a supervision as this, true and large Art, the Art which appeals to the instincts of the soul rather than the criterion of measure and rule, must necessarily at first languish and then fail altogether. It is precisely in this condition that we find ourselves; and until the general tone of criticism, both of the public and the press, is altered, its depressing influence must be felt in every kind of Art and in every picture that is painted.

Another cause of injury to Art is the large use of machinery in art manufactures, in which all trace of human work is lost, and the mind but faintly reflected or not at all. The very essence and nature of a work of Art is its visible expression of some human sentiment, emotion, or conception. Everything destitute of this expression loses claim to the title of Art, whatever may be its qualities or recommendation. We do not say that these universal means of reproduction may not bring special advantages of their own in other ways; but they bring none of the genuine artistic kind. What makes art-manufactured reproductions the more mischievous is, that generally the worst things instead of the best are chosen. In articles of domestic use, at least, fine shapes and good designs might be preferred; since the one kind is quite as easy to produce as the other, and it would also be natural, that in selecting examples of picturesque art for reproduction, worth should obtain a preference over worthlessness; the contrary, however, is the case. It is thus that we are so over-ridden by the emasculated smoothness and regularity of machine-work and other appliances of the time, that if it should

be desired to obtain anything of the freshness, raciness, or natural irregularity of a free and untrammelled artistic expression, we are driven to imitate it by a reflex process from the outside. As an example of what we mean, we may instance the mode of producing and printing modern etchings. The asperity and roughness of texture of the best specimens, which result spontaneously from the vigour with which they have been executed, and the simplicity of the means used in their production, is actually imitated by artificial contrivances; this shows the way in which our age gives prominence to the mechanism of Art, how much we think of our material, and how little of that which it ought to subserve.

The deterioration of Art among us is in some measure also due to the number of drawings continually in preparation to be poured from the press in the shape of cuts for our periodicals, newspapers, and illustrated books. These are generally required to be done on the spur of the moment, allowing no time for the completion of a well-digested design, so that the artist, to assist the imagination, or rather to find a substitute for it, is compelled to summon the aid of models or sitters before he has the least notion of what he wishes to say, and by their various arrangement and combination to adapt himself to every occasion. Of course, this is quite fatal to every valuable quality in Art. Over and over again we see reproduced the same figures, the same dresses or costume, the same attitudes, without a single fresh sentiment or any effort to reach one. What this endless reproduction and repetition of the same or similar elements is intended to serve, it would be difficult to say; for we never arrive at a new idea, excepting, perhaps, occasionally in the direction of a line; we never get a glimpse into the mind of the artist, who has become, indeed, a mere draughtsman or drawing-machine; we never rise a hair's breadth above his material; he has nothing to reveal, nothing to tell; but only to give us the endless repetition of interminable pencil-strokes, which at last become a vexation to the eye, and a burden to the printed page. If we had a tenth part of this numerous progeny well conceived, thoroughly digested, and faithfully wrought out, it would be infinitely cheaper at the price paid for mere quantity, and would give us more than ten times the pleasure; the national taste

might become cultivated instead of vitiated, and some noble purpose of Art might be served. As it is, we are flooded with slovenly workmanship, or with a shallow and easy facility which is still worse, unrelieved by any touch of mental power or the slightest sense of spiritual meaning.

Other bad influences also are at work: the vast numbers of periodicals and the dissipations of ephemeral literature, which do not allow men's minds to settle long on any one consideration, however important it may be; the constant flow of fugitive ideas that submerges all things in its course; an inconsiderate and superficial haste, which prevents repose and permits nothing to be done with thoroughness, nor any man to be at ease or at his best; and perhaps above all, the inordinate love of wealth, to which is sacrificed the fine solid qualities upon which alone true reputation can be built. Most centuries have left us something in Art more or less worth keeping; what shall we leave behind us in any form of it which future generations will prize or cherish? Our public buildings, as a rule, are but monuments of a national decay, as far as Art is concerned; our paintings and innumerable illustrations bear witness to our incapacity for all elevated thought, and we shall be known to succeeding generations as belonging to an age in which almost every spark of the epic and heroic had been quenched in the grave of a hopeless materialism.

Combined with the causes above stated, no doubt photography has been injurious to Art. Not that it ought to have been so. Its sphere of usefulness is so accurately defined, so clearly out of the range of the artistic idea, that there should be no confusion of the two, the one being a record of facts, the other a registration of ideas. Nevertheless it would seem as if many painters thought their artistic mission fulfilled in the attempt to rival photography on its own ground.

Added to the detrimental agencies already set forth may be reckoned the desire continually to furnish something new; but always in material or manner, and never from the side of simple power of conception. Generally this emulation shows itself in pure caprice, and in the tendency to work at once to death the slightest happy hint which may arise from the prolific and too dexterous brushwork of the day. No sooner is some novelty of knack or cleverness displayed,

than, without regarding its eligibility or otherwise, a hundred copyists are ready to sacrifice their own individuality to its imitation, quite forgetful of the infinitely nobler examples always within their reach, if they would only choose to study them. Nothing indeed can exemplify the power of whim so strongly as the walls of a modern exhibition of paintings; there is the white key, the yellow key, the black key; the dry manner, the glutinous manner, the hard manner, and the fuzzy manner: no centrality anywhere, no concentration of force towards any one point, by which alone supreme excellence can be achieved, no aim, in fact, at any speciality, but simply that each may excel the others in any possible variety of evil, as if every one strove to outrival his neighbour's faults.

Against our advocacy of the abstract rather than the concrete in Art it might be urged that mere local and literal representation has its position and function in painting as well as the other. This may be so; but in that case it lies quite out of the category of imaginative Art, and therefore does not come within our present scope. We also wish it to be clearly understood that the observations we have made are not altogether unexceptional in their application, though they are quite true of the English school of painting in the main. There are a few among us whose delicate discernment and whose right intentions only want the support and accumulative impetus of a school, to assume a high position in the art-history of their time. In fact, there is no want of capability to do things good and great—in this respect, perhaps, our age is quite as generally gifted as any other; but we require clear mental vision, that we may see what should be done, and disinterested energy of purpose faithfully to do it. It is more in direction than in ability that we fail; all our best activities are lost in dispersed aims, meretricious motives, and want of a leading generalship of idea.

When we say the epic has gone from amongst us, we do not refer to the academically stiff and spiritless groupings of a West or a David, dignified in their time by the name of "High Art," and which chiefly consisted of an arrangement of certain useless and unwearable draperies on the loins and shoulders of lay-figures, or a more or less orderly distribution of stage-dummies in masquerade costume (a mode which is unfortunately not altogether yet extinct); but by the

epic we mean the subservience of the lesser fact to the larger truth, a recognition of the great principle that circumstances and things, when used for an artistic end, are in themselves only of value as ministering to the ultimate idea and purpose of the artist, and are not to be dwelt on for their own sakes or for any manipulatory power or ability that may be displayed in their representation.

In entering upon a critical inquiry into the condition of the English School of Painting, it would be but wholesale condemnation and a waste of time to advance a standard to which the school does not even pretend to appeal, and which is foreign to its main tendencies and aims. We propose, then, first to examine some of the more representative works of those painters of the school who stand most prominently before the public, or who, it is supposed, may be likely to be influential either in a right or a wrong direction; criticizing them from their own standard and point of view, trying to place them with the utmost fairness in their true light and position. We shall endeavour to test them by no individual judgment, but by that which we believe would be represented by a jury of fairly educated art-critics, or, still better, by the average high-toned artist with the true instinct of his profession, without the trammels of egotism, interest, or personal feeling. After disposing of this part of our inquiry, we will take up the question of school or kind, in order to find out the relative position of the English school; how far it submits to laws that evidently prescribed and formed the characteristics of all other worthy schools; how nearly it adheres to those tenets which have always been the ruling laws of Art, or in what respects it may reject or disregard them. In order to do this the more effectually we will supplement our inquiry by comparing our school with another, which affords us the best criterion or test of excellence, showing in what that excellence consists, and the means used to attain it. We will begin, therefore, with the period of our latest art-revolution.

About half a lifetime ago a few young men set themselves to form a new theory of Art, or at least to revive one so old that at that time it had all the force and freshness of novelty. Pre-Raphaelism was the first result of this endeavour, though we are afraid it was but the repetition of the old fable of the Mountain

and the Mouse. This hideous worship of stocks and stones, we are thankful to say, has at last vanished in all but its consequences and effects, which are serious enough, and likely to remain so for some time to come. In common fairness, however, we must allow that its results are not to be wholly charged to the few over-enthusiastic young men who started it. In its highest aspect it had a finer significance than was ever popularly understood or appreciated, and to this its minuteness of detail was but an accessory. It was one of those egregious delusions which its founders have long since had the good sense to abandon, but which, in the hands of the ever-ready and uninquiring followers of new forms and modes, became the vehicle and perpetuation of perhaps as much mistaken workmanship as the name of Art can cover. Its ill-consequences were deepened by the eloquent advocacy, we cannot fairly say exposition, of a vivid and powerful thinker, many of whose most vehement opinions have since been retracted or recalled. These opinions had at that time a very large influence upon the young and uninformed; and all the more because they were associated with so much doctrine that was sound, noble, and inspiring. But though the actual substance of pre-Raphaelism is gone, its shambling awkwardness, ugly purples, flaring scarlets, raw blues, and glaring greens, with the utter abnegation of tone and aerial perspective, live like a nightmare in the memory of us all. One of its most fervent disciples was Mr. Holman Hunt, in whose works some of its worst features still survive without the redeeming quality of that fine interior spiritualism, which gave a certain reach of power to his serious and impressive "Light of the World," and to the solemn lesson of the "Scape-goat." In his "Christ in the Temple" the realistic hardness and wasteful labour of finish, resigning every appeal from the side of Art, address principally the eye, and scarcely at all the mind, of the spectator. In Mr. Hunt's latest works that we have seen he keeps the same hardness of line and ungraceful finish, which seems to believe in no answering faculty in the beholder, in no responsive recognition of the broken hint which the mind feels so deeply, but which the hand despairs to reveal. When we have looked at Mr. Hunt's pictures there is no more to be said about them. They convey nothing but what is seen with the eye; the soul and the imagination are starved before them. Their vi-

talities are frozen in their harsh lineaments and inartistic colouring. As a rule they hold no key to sentiment, and stimulate no emotion. They are photographs of fact through a mind which communicates little or nothing to them; wonders of handling and technical skill, which stop there and never get beyond.

The studies of Mr. J. F. Lewis may also be practically ranked in this class of Art, which, however valuable as transcripts of Oriental scenery, life, and character, with all their truth and faithfulness, cannot claim a high value from any other point of view.

We believe that Mr. D. G. Rossetti was one of the principal originators, as he was the most intelligent exponent, of pre-Raphaelism. With him, however, it was realism no longer, and though it perhaps retained a more archaic treatment and distribution than was usual with other painters, it was never the slave of material, but appealed by mental images, rather than by the rigid imitation of facts. Full of dislocations and awkward crowdiness, it yet always held by the sounder theory, which sought truth of mental impression rather than the reality of substantial detail. Neither has the result of pre-Raphaelism been so disastrous with Mr. Rossetti as with others of the school. In the later pictures we have seen of this painter much of its unnatural mechanism has been abandoned, and a freer treatment introduced. Though disfigured to some extent by the affectation of archaic mannerism, and wanting in the freedom, air, and ease, of the noblest era of Art, they are not to be classed with the works of insincerity and thoughtlessness. They are sometimes open to the censure which we have passed upon his poetry, and there is an intellectual strain distinctly perceptible in them; but the poetic idea, rather than the mechanical execution, is the leading object of the work.

Work like this is the more valuable because so little strenuous and noble work is now attempted. Here, indeed, lies one of our special grievances. No one thinks it worth while any longer to undertake a serious or epic work requiring indefinite devotion and thoughtfulness. Of the paintings which appear on the walls of the Academy from year to year, there are scarcely any that from the small amount of intellectual labour they reveal might not be included in the category of what artists call "pot-boilers." Generally, as far as thought and subject go, they have no more in them than might fitly serve to

illustrate the "annuals." An artist now is not content to repay himself for effort of mind and stretch of capability by doing a noble work which might raise the public mind to its own level, and last beyond his own day. If he can paint pictures quickly, and get large prices for them, he is quite contented. A figure or two, conventionally posed, without any immediate object or purpose, but with tolerably pretty faces for the women, is thought quite sufficient to constitute an approved picture; and if the textures are well imitated, the flesh freely and dexterously handled, and the folds accurately disposed, no more is asked for or wanted. The question of motive never arises, nor any doubts as to intrinsic worth of subject. No painter, except he be very young, and have what is called a "reputation" to make, ever thinks of giving us his best; and then his best must necessarily fall short of excellence. No one asks whether it is not as much worth while to live *for Art* as *by Art*; or if, in the splendid function which is the heritage of the painter there may not be attached to conscientious labour and devotion of purpose a greater and nobler reward than money can buy or a temporary popularity have it in its power to bestow.

In the school of what might be called the esoteric painters, we may class the works of Mr. Burne Jones. Some of them which we have seen (for Mr. Jones, like the rest of his brotherhood, is a sparse exhibitor), though distinguished by a certain kind of artistic power, are open to the serious objection of an unhealthy morbidness of conception. They resemble the poems of Shelley in their intensity of emotion, and sometimes border on the vague and passionate frenzy of Blake. They have no pretensions to be transcripts from nature or the life, but are rather the embodiment of those twilight broodings which belong to the fluctuating region of dreams. They have occasionally elements of seriousness, and an elevated sense of poetry in choice and distribution; but qualities like these are liable to become a mere conventional mannerism under a constant repetition of the same class of subjects, always regarded from the same point of view. Indeed, it is one of the main objections to this school that its adherents always choose the same unnatural form of face and abnormal type of feature, the same exaggerated drawing, the same dislocated movement of the figure, the same overstrained accessories and glimmering background,

which are always made to tell in the same way; so that they resemble in some manner the symbols used in heraldry; the subject being given, the old forms might be distributed almost as well by description as by the pencil. It is the sacrifice and abandonment of every other good and worthy thing to one, until that one becomes fatiguing and tiresome from its too persistent repetition. There is also another fundamental mistake underlying this form of art. It is far too intense to be largely loved and appreciated; or, indeed, to be good for us. Pictures should not require the utmost stretch of transcendental emotion in order that we may appreciate them. One of the most precious qualities, perhaps, that belongs to Art is its capacity of bestowing repose. To be roused to an excess of passion without adequate reason, without being the nobler or better for it, without even knowing precisely why one *is* roused, is not a desirable thing; is, in fact, what we very naturally resent. We all know what it is to be in the company of a nervous and excitable person, whose fatiguing demands on the sympathies are without any corresponding object or satisfaction. It is the same thing with this class of Art. It seizes upon you in whatever mood of mind, and insists that you shall become one with it: for unless the mind is worked up in a greater or less degree into its own dithyrambic condition, it is impossible to receive the full influence of the burning eyes, wild contortions, and evolutions of the actors, in these highly-wrought sensational melodramas. It is a far more gracious office to bestow repose on the mind, than to disturb it with the aimless and objectless ebullitions of a false emotion. Titian, in his sweet summer pastorals, and Giorgione, with his courtly companies enjoying the delights of a "refined rusticity," Reynolds and Gainsborough, and equable Thomas Stothard, with his pathetic touches, conceived a better mission for their pencils. The greatest masters of emotion knew when to lay the tragic pencil down, and give us tranquil glimpses of the world and life, and of those daily social and domestic joys with which we all can sympathize. But the spasmodic painters of our day know no repose from the continual access of fire added to fever, and delirium heaped upon frenzy, with all the reckless abandonment of a Cybeleian novice.

This class of works is typical of much resulting from the present state of Art among us. True "Art" has almost



passed away; Painting, as we are told by excellent authority, is now become a manufacture and a knack. It has its tradesmen and its travellers. Show-rooms are opened, and the names of well-known artists, advertised in local papers, draw the wealthy and half-educated parvenu to spend his "thousand" in some addled work, that he is told is fine and of distinguished origin. And thus, by easy transfer, he becomes what he desires—"distinguished"—as the owner of the celebrated masterpiece. Among the well-informed, however, he is thenceforth known, not as the owner, but, conversely, as "belonging to" the picture.

Painting and picture-dealing are now "speculative" and a field for "operations;" and names and works rise, fluctuate, and fall in market value without any just proportion to their merit or intrinsic worth. Patrons and collectors are for the most part merely jobbers, or "invest" with a shrewd eye to future gain upon a rising market. To "accommodate" these "patrons" and their protégés we see announced a "Fine Arts financial association," propounded by some "merchants" and a "shipowner" "to advance money to artists and others on works of Art, and"—naturally—"to effect the sale of the same, under conditions mutually advantageous"—of course—"to the borrowers and the company." Here is the *mont-de-piété* of Art. This is a private venture of the ordinary kind; but in its care for public morals the bewildered Legislature made a delicate exception "in the interest of Art," and gambling, it was told, would "do much good," "promoting love of Art," as if mere greed had any love at all. For many years we have not visited an exhibition of Art Union pictures, but the memory of these collections enables us to say that "Art" treats all its liberal "patrons" with a strict impartiality, and that the gambling section seems to have no preference above the jobbers. Their exhibitions are as well supplied with "speculative" trash as any we have lately seen in Piccadilly or Trafalgar Square.

These words remind us of a public obligation, and we would here record the expression of our thanks to the "Academy" for their annual show of paintings by old masters. In this year's exhibition was a painting which we beg the studious reader to recall to mind. Sandro Botticelli's picture of the Assumption of the Virgin was commissioned by Matteo Palmieri, who, it is said, "gave the whole

scheme of the work." It is, in fact, the marvellous but natural result of the combined efforts, with a single aim, of the employer and the painter, with no help possible from legal gambling or commercial jobbing. The result here is high excellence, where now we have confusion dire and every evil work. Greed, then, and "speculation," do not bring good to Art. Sandro knew nothing about these. He worked, and had his wages and the careful constant sympathy of his employer; and we know that sympathy, like love, works wonders. The charming consequence is seen in Botticelli's picture, which alone is worth the thousand pictures that were shown last year on the same walls.

This, then, is our moral: Let anyone who would obtain a worthy work of Art, order it of the painter, and, confiding in his honour, at whatever salary, engage him by the day, and then confer with him in constant friendly counsel. The "patron" will soon find that his interest in the painting has become far greater than the money value represents. His pleasure will not be in a mere purchased possession, but in the memory of his cordial help in the production of the work. The painter, too, receiving sympathetic aid and criticism from a friend whose thoughts are hourly stirred by intercourse with men, will have his mind strengthened and braced to work with constant zeal and vigorous imagination. How great a contrast this to the gregarious studio conversation of our modern artists, men whose individuality is nearly swamped in cliques, whose thoughts are "in-and-in," whose minds follow their fingers and who are emphatically "led by the hand," whose works, by natural result, are small, however broad may be the canvas.

We are within the walls of the Academy. Let us, in our cursory review, select the most successful of its members. Mr. Millais was a chief leader of the pre-Raphaelitic movement, and at one time was esteemed the Achilles of the school. He, more than the rest, has not merely relaxed its strictest tenets, but almost abandoned them; and he now holds a position which it is hard to define in one word, but which perhaps might be called that of the leader of the exoteric school, since it is altogether opposed in manner and purpose to the one already described. Instead of attempting to reproduce mental visions in forms merely indicative and more or less symbolic, Mr. Millais has a fact, or is supposed to have one, for



everything he paints. He has no definite or ulterior aim in his work as a whole; that is, he has adopted no special mission, and cannot be said to express any particular sentiment as the ruling order of his work, for the reason that he gets it all from the outside. Mr. Millais' subjects are simple enough; they require no intellectual acumen to fathom, no particular education to appreciate, consequently he is the popular painter of the day by distinction; for having no more to say than his skillful pencil can represent, and no more to represent than anyone can easily appreciate, his merits, which are principally of one order and all upon the surface, are patent to all, and, for those who look for nothing further, complete and satisfactory. In the broad question of Art, however, it is necessary to bring another criterion to bear upon them. If Art means anything more than a simple power over material, a certain deftness of perception in the subtle limitations of form, an appreciation of tender and delicate passages of colour, and a faculty of obtaining fine surface qualities of manipulation, perhaps the works of Mr. Millais will not be found altogether satisfactory. With considerable graces of pencil Mr. Millais combines an easy society-nonchalance of treatment, which in some drawing-rooms may be appreciated, and in other places goes for everything, and which even among painters receives a wide measure, perhaps too wide a measure, of recognition. The highest form of Art, however, exacts something more than this. A deep and genuine mission scarcely lies within the compass of a tea-table gossip, or in the easy requirements of the lower world of fashion and convention—the playthings of a day. A wider circle is commended by those nobler aims and powers which despise the butterfly elements of society-pleasing, and set little store by the pleasant flatteries of young-ladyism and old-fogism. Mr. Millais, we are very sure, is not at his best; for, although we doubt if either his "Huguenot" or "Order of Release" are pictures of all time, their tender earnestness being injured by their hardness of line and realistic rigidity, yet the sweet, indefinite poetry of "Autumn Leaves" could only be born out of a mind in which there was more of the same kind, and this very much better than anything he has given us for a long time past. It is with pain and regret that we see powers like his used to so little advantage. The trifling and utterly

unworthy subjects upon which his best energies are for the most part spent, make this regret all the deeper, and it is still further increased by the evidence of manipulatory gifts and powers so rare. He has nothing to tell us but what he has seen; any accidental event serves to hang his picture upon, a fire, a flood, a dreary day, and his message is done; his tale is told, and we are expected to be satisfied. But is this all we have a right to ask or demand from the pencils of our masters? Mr. Millais' manner also is one of a highly dangerous tendency. His free use of raw white, his frequent chalkiness of surface and actual slovenliness of execution, are both unsatisfactory to the mind and disappointing to the taste. The tender and innocent sweetness of a few of his faces of infancy and childhood survives with happy recollection; but others of this class, with numerous transcripts from the life and nature, which it is impossible precisely to define or classify, can hardly maintain a reputation bought at so cheap a price. Perhaps an examination of Mr. Millais' portraits would lead us to the most unsatisfactory conclusions of all. Without tone or any high sense of colour, relying wholly on their texture and surface qualities, united with the ease before alluded to, we know not where to place them. Put them, in regard to aim and intention alone, beside the well-accredited examples of any school—beside the paintings of Velasquez, Tintoretto, or Titian, the portraits of Reynolds and Gainsborough, or even of Romney—and they have hardly a single quality to support the comparison. They utterly lack all the inward sweetness and harmony, the natural artistic ease, the suffused hints of a keenly-felt sentiment for colour, which inform and penetrate the pictures of these and every other treasured school of portraiture, however high the key of colour used and however cool the tone chosen for the picture. In last year's exhibition Mr. Millais' pictures held their usual place in prominence and popularity; but the chief impression they left upon us was the artist's remarkable facility of work and his sense of time's immeasurable value, which combined with art must lead to fortune.

What is most disastrous, Mr. Millais' faults become exaggerated in his imitators. His slovenly treatment and frequent looseness of line, his vagueness of general purpose, his bareness of sentiment, poverty of tone, and want of ful-

ness in colour, without his graphic dexterity, not only tend to destroy all art-power in their work, but also to vitiate and to weaken the public taste by making it accustomed to such meagre offerings—the slender antepast, instead of the full feast and ample satisfaction of the æsthetic appetite.

Leaving the works of this painter, a not unpleasant nor unmasterly display of characteristic realism is to be found in those of Mr. J. C. Hook. They bear with them a fresh and wholesome atmosphere, laden with sea-wind and odour of the brine. There is great sameness of subject and treatment in them all, which has sometimes a tendency to become mannerism. He has no revelations to make, but his one story, as far as it goes, is generally well told, and, on the whole, is an agreeable and refreshing one to listen to.

Another order of realism brings us to the works of Mr. G. D. Leslie, which are characterized by an easy social tone embodying a sentiment which, though not very large or important, is readily appreciable. Solid and somewhat cumbrous in manner, they have a certain speciality of mission, and a unity of purpose in their composition displayed throughout in a sufficiently broad manner, without any super-eminent qualities of refinement and delicacy. Sometimes his landscape has an agreeable harmony of treatment. His figures are graceful and elegant, with a dash of the sentimentality of the drawing-room and the boudoir. Mr. Leslie's pictures have some pretensions to the idyllic—pretty pastorals of the lawn and river-side; but the shepherds have left their crooks and the shepherdesses their lambs for the delights of Belgravia and Mayfair—their dog-roses are changed for “standards,” their posies have become bouquets, and are composed of exotics, or at least garden-flowers of the most approved culture; if they pick a daisy it is a curiosity, and they are quite as well acquainted with the artificial flora of the ball-room as with that of their own garden-beds, and would certainly be found much better adepts at the game of croquet than at the preparation of those

Country messes

Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses.

Mr. Leslie's verdurous carpets are kept in order by the mowing-machine, and know the trimming-shears of the gardener. His colour is pale and timid—his quality opaque, dry, and loaded—his

general treatment never giving free reins to the painter and colourist with a full faith in his material.

A painter who more distinctly partakes of the deficiencies just mentioned, and who may be said to stand within the limits of the materialistic school, is Mr. A. Moore, whose speciality is far less congenial and harmonious. His hybrid Greek fancies are aimed at what would be perhaps vulgarly called “the classic,” but it is really of a very pseudo-classic order. Mr. Moore tries to introduce a pure Greek sentiment into nineteenth-century England, which has pretty much the same effect as a modern bonnet would have had on the head of Aspasia. He is the slave of lines and form; his figures are Grecian and his draperies are Grecian; but within the same canvas Mr. Moore can place the modern violin and introduce other discordant accessories. The mental perplexity arising from such combinations is extremely irritating and provoking. His drawing is executed with the utmost care, his conscientiousness is extreme, even to fastidiousness; but all this quite fails to reconcile us to such incongruous elements. The principle on which they are assorted is utterly and entirely false. They are an attempt to import a sculpturesque character into painting. The noblest mission of the Art, as far as expression is concerned, is abandoned; the use of colour is altogether forsworn, excepting in a quite subsidiary and altogether decorative way, in order to carry out this anomalous idea. The flat and unrelieved design is worked in washy tints and sickly whites, the very denudation and solstitial winter of painting. It is true Mantegna made large use of the limbs and draperies of the ancient marbles; but with what a robustness of infused power and sinew vigour are they endowed! They are not the effeminate dreamers of a summer day, but brawny men with backbone and sinew, strong-limbed bearers of burdens, Centaurs and mighty sea-monsters bellowing in the brine, whose hoarse cries seem to resound in their pictures as they rend each other in the flying foam. If Mr. Moore does use colour in those of his subjects which are a little less classic, it is always under protest. It is kept dead and flat and pale, so that it appears unnecessary and even objectionable, as it never fails to convey a sentiment of weakness, however powerful the lines that limit its extension. Mr. Moore has certainly mistaken the true object of his Art. Rav-

ished with the exquisite beauty of the marbles of the Parthenon, he has sacrificed everything to the reproduction of their fine majestic movement and grand line. But this can never be the painter's chiefest aim. Had Mr. Moore a wider education in the sentiment of Art, he would not fail to know that painting has ideas of its own as noble and significant as those which find expression in the superhuman forms and half-etherial plaited drapery of these ancient monuments. It is certainly not the most important mission of the painter to elaborately tell us how a fold of drapery should fall or float upon the wind; neither does it lie in the assurance that, under given circumstances and conditions, the true line of a leg or an arm falls to a hair's breadth in a certain place and in no other. A single breath of imaginative vitality would outweigh all such punctilios; one vigorous independent thought would be well worth an endless sequence of such adventitious erroneous compositions, which, after all, are but the withered leaves that hang upon a broken bough.

At a still greater extreme of waywardness, and with the materialistic tendency more pronounced, is Mr. Whistler, with whose clever etchings most Art-lovers are familiar. His rule of painting seems to be as simple in its theory as it is difficult in practice and unsatisfactory in result. The theory is that no stroke is to be repeated, and that no portion of the canvas is to be re-touched; such at least, is the inference we draw from the manner in which the crude masses of pigment lie upon its surface. It is true there are certain qualities to be got in this way, which can be attained in no other; but it would be well to ask if they may not be bought at too dear a price. Some of his later portraits, with all their promptness of execution, are wearisomely monotonous. It is grievous to see a painter of any artistic power thus employed in spurious imitations of Oriental ingenuity and taste, making tints and tones a substitute for every grander quality, and reducing painting to the level of an ornamental knack chiefly valued by house-decorators, and by them called "High Art." So wedded is Mr. Whistler to his material, and so oblivious of everything else, that he has been content to abandon even the pretence of a subject, and to name his very pictures from the colours used in painting them. As to his "studies," and "symphonies," and "nocturnes" in this or that colour or combination of colours, which

consist in passing the loaded brush a few times from one side of the canvas to the other—even allowing the best for them, that they represent some prevailing tone or colour of the day or night—we would ask what purpose can they serve? At what are they directed? Is motion supposed to be represented by a streak? It seems to us that Mr. Whistler, in these capricious and fantastic productions, resembles an orator from whose lips we are expecting an important message, but who should treat us to "studies" in the verb "to be" or to some "arrangement" of adverbs and prepositions. To perceive the full unworthiness of such empirical expedients as these, it is only necessary to turn to any of the nobler names in Art, and to compare the simple method of their work with any specimen of Mr. Whistler's "artifice."

It is refreshing to leave these vagaries for something better and nobler in its nature and object. There is another school or section of a school to which we might give the name of epic or heroic, rather, however, by way of distinction than of designation; since its inchoate development and faint pronunciation are too feeble and uncertain to make good and absolute the title. This school is in its work best represented by Messrs. Leighton, Watts, and Walker, and by the late George Mason. The artists we have mentioned differ from each other widely; but yet, in certain fundamental attributes they have much resemblance. None of them idolize the mere material of their work; they never lose sight of their picture as a whole, nor for a moment disregard its meaning and its purpose; they are not mere texture copyists; the language of their Art is made entirely subservient to their idea; accessories are never elevated to the chief rank; the subject of the work is equally removed from violence and tameness, and is adapted to address the soul in all its moods in an artistic manner usually right in aim and in intention.

The method of this school, in some respects, is most distinctively displayed by Mr. Watts. The earliest works of this painter, with which we are familiar, are "Alfred Inciting the Saxons to repel the Danes," now in the House of Parliament, of which we shall speak presently, and his large fresco in the Hall of Lincoln's Inn, representing the "School of Legislation." If he had done nothing more than the latter work, it would have been quite enough to distinguish him creditably in an age so slight as the present. It is

composed of numerous figures disposed in a somewhat similar manner to those in Raphael's "School of Athens": indeed we think that in arrangement he has followed his great master much too closely. His subject has been thoughtfully conceived, and throughout regarded from a noble point of view. The distribution is large and broad; the massing is distinctive, weighty, and unencumbered; the colouring harmonious and grave. The character and object proper for such painting have been so intelligently grasped, the material is so well understood, and the result so satisfactory, that it may be considered a sign of the debasement of our present School of Painting that such work has so little influence on the artistic movements of the time. It is true the work is only in the nature of a revival, and on that account can have but a secondary or diminished influence. Although Mr. Watts has evidently studied the sentiment of the Roman school in this picture, the result is not wholly of a Roman character. It rather resembles the Siennese manner, and might very well have been painted by Beccafumi or Baldassare Peruzzi; for in this school we find the same largeness of arrangement, the same rightness of perception, as in that of Rome, but with less elaboration of material, less command of means, less scholasticism, and more of a simplicity bordering on inadequacy, with just that want of condensation and directness of purpose which is required to give vigour to expression, and to make its utterance absolute and irresistible. This fresco appears to have stood the test of time tolerably well—it is fifteen or sixteen years, if we remember rightly, since it was painted—though we believe Mr. Watts has had some trouble with it since that time.

These remarks are also mainly true of Mr. Watts's works in general. Even when the result is unsatisfactory, as is not unfrequently the case, his paintings still command attention for their plan and aim. His epic is generally well constructed, his conception large, his mode of working equable, and his manner good; and now and then we receive from him something as near to what is great as the Art-education of the age and our peculiar social circumstances will allow, but his particular power is in a great measure lost for want of the nutriment of that congeniality of circumstances which adds force to energy and gives to power a new robustness. Mr. Watts requires the sup-

port of a large Art-sentiment from outside to correct, expand, and fortify him. As it is, he gains nothing from his surroundings. Thus his faults and excellences are all his own, and there is no extraneous healthy influence to correct the one or to advance the other. The great want of the time to which we allude is the spiritual energy which should stimulate imagination in the picturesque direction, and make the artist's work as much that of his age and his public as his own. Mr. Watts's works, in spite of their frequent grandeur and largeness, want, for the most part, a more defined and specially directed significance. However impressive may be the external treatment of his subjects, their inward mission has no corresponding power. They are like "a tale of little meaning, though the words are strong." The arrangement of a multitude of figures within the compass of a canvas, small or large, however delicate in feeling and noble in composition, and broad and dignified in manner, may yet want weight of purpose. The imagination and the intellect must be combined to make Art powerful and its influence great; still there are exceptions to the general want of purpose in this artist's work. In his "Love and Death," exhibited a year or two ago, a preponderating sentiment reached to the true epic, both in conception and realization, crowning his work with a very noble end. In many of his pictures he is not so happy. The crowded nude or semi-nude figures which leave no part of his canvas unoccupied, are often but the embodiments of a certain measure of artistic skill without that power which alone can carry a message to the heart or mind of the spectator. His portrait heads are often fine, far finer than Mr. Millais'; but they lack the certainty and confidence of treatment which would place them among the very finest. They are also, for the most part, too much encumbered by the painter and his Art, smack too closely of the studio, and adhere too strictly to the specialities of a style which seems to be midway between the worlds of imagination and reality, and essentially to belong to neither. A mode of work, in which the real and the ideal are mingled without being combined, is in principle absurd, and in practice nugatory and inconsistent.

We should like to say a few words about Mr. Watts's manipulation. It is not always the same; but his early fuller treatment is to be preferred to the later and drier one. He has of late used some

very volatile medium, which leaves a dry meanness of surface anything but pleasant to the eye. His colour, too, is black, opaque, and dead. Sometimes, particularly in the foreground of his larger pictures, he uses the dangerous expedient of glazing so largely as quite to frustrate its end, and to produce heaviness and opacity just where he wants lightness and transparency of quality. If Mr. Watts would permit us to give him a word of advice, we would suggest that he should rely less on surface work, abandon the use of heavy glazes, and endeavour to gain transparency from the ground of the picture after the manner, which we intend presently to examine, of his great masters the Venetians.

Mr. Leighton has been more influenced by the French school and the earlier Italian painters, but there is nothing archaic or affected in his painting. In looking at his work one is struck with the firm grasp which he always appears to have of his subject. This is as apparent in his earlier as in his later pictures, in his "Procession of Cimabue's Picture" and "Romeo and Juliet," as in the last of his works on the walls of the Royal Academy. His talent partakes of the decorative, not the ornamentally decorative, but that of a scenic and dramatic kind. His large treatment and broadly-felt surfaces might be well adapted for mural painting, if there were any use for it in an age of uncertain aims and unstable habitations. He is not powerful as a colourist; indeed his pictures are little better than an apology for colour of any high order; but they are a very good apology. He now and then strikes a fine key; but, on the whole, colour with him is but a form of intellectual expression—an intellectual symbol, so to speak, that belongs more to the mind than the soul, and never constitutes the speciality of his work. He is always manly, broad, and serious, and has the reticence that consorts with a large appeal and rightly directed aims. But we have a serious remonstrance with him, in that he seems almost to have given up anything like a large purpose in his Art as far as importance of subject is concerned. With some exceptions, he has scarcely yet justified the promise of his early works in this respect; not from lack of ability but from want of enterprise. With so great a capability of drawing as is revealed even in his illustrations of "Romola," it is evident that he has few technical difficulties to encounter. Mr. Leighton's paintings for a long time

past have, with one or two exceptions, represented very little intellectual labour, and move only in a narrow way. We understand, however, that he is engaged upon some large public works, which, it is to be hoped, will cancel this complaint.

Among the rising painters of this school (allowing for the differences of speciality before alluded to) is Mr. F. Walker. His character is thoroughly English. We do not know if he has ever studied in the great schools of Europe; but if he has done so, there is no relic or reminiscence of them in his work, and yet in some respects he has reached their higher qualities, particularly in his later works, which display great picturesque power in their calm breadth of treatment and repose. Now and then his smaller works are excellent. There was, for instance, a picture lately exhibited (we believe the study, if it may be called so, for a larger one) of a girl or woman in a court of justice, which, though measuring but a few inches, had in it all the elements of the largest work; and we mention it here as an example that large epic treatment may lie within very narrow limits, and does not necessarily demand great size. Mr. Walker's pictures, nevertheless, are open to serious exception in other directions. The prevailing colour, or tone-colour, if it may be so called, is very objectionable. It is almost always an unnatural yellow or a forced and heated orange. The element of greyness, at least as a reserve, is, above all, necessary and desirable in works of a large intellectual intention. For want of this quality his pictures become very fatiguing, and ultimately irritating to the eye. Mr. Walker also dwells sometimes too long on the individual parts of his picture, which perhaps would be right, if his object were less broad and serious. But even in respect of object or intention, we should like to see Mr. Walker take a higher level. His pictures, particularly of figures, have too much the appearance of transcriptions, and too little of the signs of mental formative power in them to stamp them as epic in the highest sense.

The last example we shall give of the broad and artistic class of painters now under consideration is that of the late Mr. Mason, whose recent death is in every respect much to be deplored. His works are some of the most hopeful in the modern English school of painting: even where they are promises rather than performances, indications rather than



completions, they are always widely suggestive and infinitely instructive. Mr. Mason was emphatically the artist's painter, the most discerning of whom are always ready to excuse inadequacies of manipulatory power, when the primary and most essential element of all is manifest.

Mr. Mason was a lover of twilight, of the gentle hour which is so touching to all poetic minds, when a dreamy glimmer pervades the still and solemn landscape and stars become visible. So much has he loved these tender moments, that it would almost seem as if he had lived in them in a kind of delicate sympathy. What adds, perhaps, to the impressiveness of his scenes is the reminiscence that they seem to bear of a more southern climate than our own, where the hues of the sky are a tone deeper than ours and the solemn greys of the landscape a thought more rich, as he had seen them in the soft lines, broken with mournful tints of crumbling masonry on the sad Campagna of Rome. Even his figures partake of the same spiritual seriousness that his scenes inspire; the bustle of the day and noise of the busy world are hushed and tranquillized in the calm peace of an idyllic repose.

His subjects are not very various; but one never grows tired of them. It is now a shepherd seated at the root of an old tree piping to some maidens, whose quiet movements are in perfect harmony with the scene around them, bringing back the old Arcadia and witnessing that the bucolic sweetnesses of Theocritus and Virgil still survive among us, and that the genius of an ancient rural life is not yet destroyed; now it may be a sweet-faced country-girl going home with her gleanings, while the sloping upland, crowned with yellow sheaves, takes the last glow of day: now it is a group of merry children dragging along a refractory calf or donkey, or driving a flock of hissing geese; and now a weary labourer, who returns homewards with his team leisurely through the twilight, or a group of mowers from the corn-field, with long scythes, against the light of a golden harvest-moon. Here we have almost all Mr. Mason's material elements; and yet they are quite sufficient for the expression of a deep and genuine poetic feeling. With a few exceptional cases we find that the painter is forgotten in his work as we enter into his magic world and make it our own. One or two of these exceptions we will take the opportunity of mentioning. We think his

"Evening Hymn" is liable to a rather strong objection on this score, fine and noble as is its general sentiment. The singing-girls are far too artificially posed and modelled. The picture is so evidently balanced by the two figures separated from the main group on each side as to materially interfere with its simplicity and naturalness. Another objection may be made to the dog in the "Girls Dancing by the Sea," as it regards earnestly the bag suspended from the bough, which, however natural an incident here interferes somewhat with the main calm interest of the picture, and divides the attention with perhaps one of the sweetest bits of English landscape ever put upon canvas.

As Mr. Mason was a deep lover, so was he a close student, of Nature, even a copyist, from a right point of view. We have understood that he was indefatigable in his outdoor studies; and yet these are efforts after the sentiment of nature rather than the portrayal of her facts. He aimed at reproducing her appearances as they affect the poetic mind, rather than her formal representation, which, indeed, he always avoided. Careful and capable draughtsman though he was, there is not a bit of texture, and very little of absolute form pronounced definitely as such, to be found in any of his pictures. They are pictures of aspect or mental impression rather than the actual substance of what he saw, and hold their place more in the mind than in the eye.

It is difficult to play the critic on pictures like these; yet to define his true place in the history of Art every part of Mr. Mason's artistic character must be regarded. He is not always uniformly happy. There is a hardness and coldness in some of his works compared with others. There is occasionally, too, a tendency to confusion, and even in his finished works a want of articulation and definition which interferes a little with their higher qualities. This arises perhaps from the desire to place before the spectator the painter's full impression encumbered with as little material as possible: and, besides this, there is often in imaginative minds, feeling acutely in certain directions, a want of expressional power, a lack of the consummating faculty; which is an excusable defect to those gifted in the same direction, but an obvious fault to those of a less sentimental and more objectively constructed nature and character. It is interesting to see how Mr. Mason felt his way through his sketches



to the peculiar qualities he desired. Some are wholly of a tentative nature, the merest blurs of colour, a species of artistic short-hand, yet intelligible to the initiated as containing a compendium or synopsis of the completed picture. Pursuing the function of censors, we may notice also that Mr. Mason's skies are occasionally somewhat muddy in quality, and are only partially cleared at some expense to the landscape. It may be said, with every respect for what he has left us, that his works, on the whole, show rather what the mind yearns to accomplish than what the hand is able to perform; the refined and elegant instinct of the able and imaginative amateur, rather than the commanding utterances of the representative of a school of a broadly diffused and healthily developing artistic sentiment.

It is hard to say whether the influence of a painter so delicately constituted is likely to be advantageous or otherwise: indeed, this wholly depends on the character and idiosyncrasy of his pupils or followers. The action of special genius or power on a robust mind is to cause it to develop its own capacities and gifts without attempting any close or external imitation of what it sees and admires, excepting incidentally as one of the elements of its own education. This sound method teaches the mind to measure and assert its individual capabilities and powers, and does not lead it to ignore them or to submit to any foreign influence, however great or noble that may be. In such an instance as the present no material imitation would be of the least service to appropriate or "convey" the tender influence diffused from these contemplative and subjective works, which suggest qualities so rare and impalpable that the artist himself was not always able to grasp or retain them. Such paintings can only be regarded as intimations or indications in the abstract of the rich results of thoughtful and conscientious labour, and as a testimony that good Art has not yet lost all her resources, but that there are new aspects and ideals still for disinterested and devoted, persevering and imaginative, workmen.

There is still another group of works, in all respects antithetical to the one we have just examined, and which, in spite of its general popularity, must be called the debased school, since the elements of the artistic principle are utterly ignored, misunderstood or otherwise altogether perverted in its hard literalisms and unimaginative transcriptions. This

constitutes a very wide section of modern painting, so wide as to include immeasurably the larger proportion of it. We will take, however, the names of two or three as the representatives of its most distinctive features; say Mr. Frith, Mr. Brett, and Mr. Birket Foster.

With Mr. Frith it is very hard to deal, as he holds a place so remote from the genuine function of right Art, and so closely bordering on that of the mere illustrator, that it is difficult to say if his works come under the category of Art at all. There is, it is true, a degree of interest in looking at his pictures of the "Seaside," the "Railway Station," and the "Derby Day," with their various realistic groups and circumstances, but it is the interest of an illustration or pictorial representation without any shade of the artistic sentiment or any foundation of true Art whatever. Indeed, we suppose that Mr. Frith does not intend to make any broader appeal than that of being the mere transcriber or photographer of the promiscuous crowds of men and women which he may see anywhere around him. His pictures have no moral and no meaning in them. A comparison of his works with those of Hogarth, who was quite as accurate a painter of the men and women of his time, will show exactly what we mean. With the latter we have everything set before us subordinate to an artistic purpose, the purpose of the whole picture. Setting aside the qualities of painting which they exhibit (which are now too much overlooked), they possess the highest characteristics of the social epic. We have a hundred lessons taught us, a hundred suggestions made to us, by the subtle art of the painter. These are all put before the mind in so delicate and insensible a manner that we think the painter's generalizations our own, and the compendium of human nature with which he supplies us, its follies, its vanities, and sins, presented to us with the consummate art of one of the most philosophic students of life and character, seem like the results of our own observations and reflection. Again, if we compare Mr. Frith's pictures with those of Wilkie, how lamentable is the difference! In place of a centralized motive we get confusion and perplexity; in place of the nice perception of the various shades of character given with a sweet artistic refinement, we have the coarseness of the excursion-train and the breeding of the tavern-bar; instead of the subtle poetry which Art ought to be able to find in all grades of life and to in-

fuse into all her works, we get an congenial prose that reflects its most discordant elements and introduces its most disagreeable associations.

If we look in Mr. Frith's work for the high qualities which distinguish the works of the painters we have just referred to, we do not find any of them or any trace of them, but a jumble of heterogeneous figures and circumstances, unselected, unasorted, and absolutely commonplace. There is no indication of a governing or ruling principle or purpose; and after the first gaze they fatigue the mind and pall upon the eye from their wearisome vacuity, their slender trivialities, and their utter denial of every kind of inward appeal which constitutes the soul of Art and makes the better part of every noble picture.

Neither is Mr. Frith's workmanship happy. He ignores atmosphere in the glare of a vulgar realism, and outrages colour in the absence of any prevailing sentiment of eclectic distribution: he sets tone aside as useless in the distraction of a hundred different keys. His faces have a hardness of quality with nothing beneath them; while the dresses and costumes of his undignified men and women, borrow no character from those by whom they are worn, and only remind one of the "set up" of a Bond Street tailor, or, conversely, of the rags of a theatrical wardrobe.

Mr. Brett has imported the same vicious mode of treatment into landscape Art. His metallic seas, woolly clouds, grass without softness, and trees without any touch of the verdurous plasticity of nature, only oppress the mind with a sense of bondage which shuts out every congenial and sympathetic influence that we are accustomed to receive from Nature. In Mr. Brett's pictures Nature has ceased to express herself, her generous inspirations are destroyed, her fine ministrations overlooked or disregarded. The freezing wand of the enchanter has passed over her palpitating vitalities, and they are reduced to the condition of congealed and inexpressive petrifications. His unsuggestive workmanship rather hinders and obscures our own interpretation of Nature than assists us to any fresh significance and character that he may have found in it.

Our ungracious task only gives us one example more of this mistaken school of painters. Grateful as we must feel to Mr. Birket Foster for the number of pretty landscape vignettes with which

he has ornamented our drawing-room tables, necessity compels us to protest against the field of Art, or rather the mode of expressing himself, which he has chosen; particularly in his water-colour drawings, whose exhaustive manipulation and conventional textures prevent the mind at once from going a step beyond them. If Mr. Foster merely aims at reaching the admiration of unreflective observers or non-observers — of those to whom "a primrose by a river's brim" is but a primrose and is "nothing more," bringing no glow into the soul, and having no associative connection with the world that lies within — he may succeed; but to those who see beyond the substance, to whom substance is but the symbol of the interior essence, who are ever ready to seize an indication, whose souls only need the significant letter set before them in order to read its deeper meaning, all Mr. Foster's laborious "finish" will but obscure the inward vision and exclude those exquisite glimpses and "warm excursions of the mind" which are the most indispensable complement and the noblest addition to the true artist's labour, without whose help, indeed, his toil will be in vain.

It is useless to pursue our subject as a special criticism any farther. We have already passed under review some of the most important features of our present school of painting, and have said quite enough to make our stand-point clearly appreciable. As to some of the older elements which have overlived their time and are now dying out, they may be left in peace. They will do no more harm, as they are doing no good; and we may safely leave them to the end they merit. We do not, however, pretend to have exhausted our subject. There are many notable names and works which, perhaps, might be advantageously criticized in one way or another; but as our object here is rather to elucidate a thesis — to make clear the actual and relative position of the English school of painting — than to give a comprehensive or detailed account of it in all its various manifestations, which within our limits would be impossible, we must leave them unnoticed. The works, for example, of Sir Edwin Landseer, whose intelligent interpretation of animal life has made for him a field entirely his own, since none of his numerous imitators have been able to follow him with any considerable degree of success, might perhaps have found a

place in our inquiries ; but as they would not be specially or additionally illustrative of the large question we have in view, and as our position is a defined one, it is not necessary to discuss them.

Our inquiry, however, into the present condition of the English school of painting would hardly be complete unless we were to make some observations on the paintings which ought to best interpret its highest skill and embody its loftiest powers. We allude to those works in the Houses of Parliament, upon which so much time, money, and deliberation have been spent, with most unsatisfactory results. Without entering into the question of how they have been done, and what it might have been better or best to do, we will at once advance to the examination of their qualities as the representatives of the national Art-standard.

On our entrance into the Royal Gallery we are confronted with the two vast works of Maclise, the "Meeting of Wellington and Blücher after the Battle of Waterloo" and the "Death of Nelson." They are painted, as is well known, in simple water-colour, with the superimposition of water-glass or silicate of potassium, which, in another form, is the basis of the manufactured glass of common use. But it is in vain we try to imitate the subtle chemistry of nature. However accurately balanced our compounds may be, the diamond is unattainable. In this case, owing either to disintegration or precipitation, or to the numerous external influences at work upon it, the indestructible medium has already given way, and some portion of the earliest painted of these pictures is partially destroyed. To speak of the pictures themselves : the labour and devotion bestowed upon them inspire respect. They are not by any means artists' pictures, yet they have large claims in their own way and from their own centre. If they were upon canvas they would be amenable to another kind of criticism in regard to quality of workmanship ; their hard lines, which never lose themselves, their sturdy and unwavering realism, their rigid and uncompromising treatment, their unrelieved inflexibility and metallic colouring, would at once exclude them from a category of the greatest works ; but, on the other hand, their dramatic multitudinousness and energy, their robust power, their conscientious thoroughness from their own point of view, demand a considerate notice. In some situations

they would be intolerable ; but in their present position they are not inharmounious with what surrounds them ; for they are monumental in subject, as they are in some respects as paintings. At least we may say this of them, that no one else could have given them to us in their great grasp and high-spirited and vigorous portrayal of facts. They are very superior to the excessively overpraised Munich frescoes. Their chief interest, however, is not an artistic but merely a human one. One cannot help being impressed with the scenic probability of many of the most touching episodes, as the dying men, who with a last effort, raise their swords in the presence of the Duke ; the stern peacefulness on the countenance of the dead trumpeter, whose head is pillowed on the broken wheel of a piece of artillery ; the gentle expression on the face of the youthful officer, "young gallant Howard," borne by two pitying soldiers ; the monk who holds the crucifix before the closed eyes of the apparently-departed Hanoverian ; or the grey, middle-aged warriors, half-buried in the carnage, whose last thought has been of home and the dear ones left behind. There is something, too, of genuine artistic power expressed in the face of the Duke of Wellington, whose stern and grimy features are filled with a mingled expression of fatigue, triumph, and suppressed excitement, the central figure in this scene of confusion, bloodshed, and death.

The picture of the "Death of Nelson" is not nearly so notable as the other. It has less incident and variety, and the story is less powerfully told. The face of the mortally-wounded hero is overspread with a ghastly spasm, whose painful contortions are horrible to look upon. One would much rather have seen him portrayed with the soft expression associated with the last "Kiss me, Hardy," on his lips, even if it had been at the sacrifice of the literal truthfulness of the circumstance considered at the precise moment chosen by the painter.

Of Mr. Herbert's large, and in some respects more pretentious picture of "Moses Descending from the Mount" in the Peers' Robing Room, we cannot say so much : for though executed from a presumably higher point of view than the pictures just described, and though more agreeable in some qualities of manipulation, it appears to have been done rather with the cautious calculation of the academic than with the enthusiasm of a

master great with his idea. A measure of realism may not only be admitted, but is perhaps desirable, in the representation of an historical event of comparatively recent occurrence; but in a didactic work—which appeals, or ought to appeal, purely and entirely to the moral nature, in which the fact does not depend in the least degree upon any special set of circumstances for its impressiveness, and is, indeed, already removed out of time and place by the infinitely more important contingency of its having been raised to the quality of a religious abstraction, addressing itself wholly to the mind, and not at all to the eye, in its essential object and design—a purely realistic treatment is not only misplaced, but is likely to act as a barrier to the special influence of the occasion. Mr. Herbert's picture may rather be said to be a huge study made in the alphabet of Art than the embodiment of a masterly conception in the mind of the painter. Its claims are those of an illustration more than of an artistic representation. The posed models which personate the figures have evidently been drawn with the closest fidelity to the life, the draperies have all been disposed with the nicest care, the attitudes have been adjusted with the strictest regard to propriety, the various expressions have been inserted into the faces in the most correct manner, and yet the result is wholly unsatisfactory. One can never believe that the tall figure with the two stone slabs in his hands is really like the majestic Moses who ruled the Israelites, whose "anger had waxed hot" when he had broken the first tables and ground the golden calf to powder—whom Michel Angelo has given to us in marble with so much dignity and power. Even were the dramatic interest preserved in the figures, it would have been quite ruined by the background. Mr. Herbert, with so noble and lofty a story to tell, should not distract the thoughts of the spectators from its intrinsic impressiveness to the details of a background worked up with photographic care. That he will not allow the eye to pause or rest for a moment in any unmanipulated place, shows that he is not deeply moved by the grandeur of his idea, and that he chooses to display the shell and outer covering of his subject rather than to develop and surround us with its inner sentiment. Better a thousand mistakes in the technicalities of Art or the probabilities of circumstance (for, indeed, the best and most exact imitation

possible is nothing but a probability) than this lack-life system of composition and arrangement, which comes from the head and hand, but never from the heart; which kindles no answering enthusiasm within us and awakens no thought beyond that, at most, of the skill of the artist and the possibilities of his material. Infinitely worse than the picture itself is the fatal tendency and principle involved in it. Mr. Herbert has thought of nothing but a cold realization of the circumstances of his subject, and never for a moment of giving us its inner meaning and central power. It is a mere statement of facts with which we are all familiar and to which the pictorial representation adds nothing.

In other respects also we think this work a mistake. Mr. Herbert has laid his ground in white, consequently it stands in far too high a key to be impressive from any serious or picturesque point of view. The effect is that of a solemn piece of music played in a key eight or ten tones higher than that for which it has been composed, or upon a light and airy instrument instead of a grave and sober one. All solemnity of effect is destroyed, and all rightness and fitness of decoration ignored. The glaring sky, the garish background, the inharmonious and commonplace figures fill the room with an insistatory impertinence which quite outsteps the end and purpose of such a work. Perhaps it would be profitless to point Mr. Herbert to the works of those who have always and everywhere been considered the first masters in this kind of decoration, to refer him to the walls and ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, the Stanze of the Vatican or the halls of the Ducal Palace, where the noble breadth, grand proportions, and subdued appeal of these great masters reach and impress the mind without wearying the eye. They do not thrust themselves unduly on our notice, or offend the taste with an unseasonable persistence that will not be forgotten nor for a single instant overlooked. In this respect a lesson might have been taken from Mr. Watts's less obtrusive, but at the same time quite as powerful, fresco at Lincoln's Inn.

Of the works of Mr. Cope in the Peers' Corridor, nothing more favourable can be reported. Under every disadvantage of situation and ill-lighting, they are still more unfortunate in their inartistic manipulation, unimaginative treatment, and utter want of the least perception of the

requirements of the material, or of the nature and fitness of the place and occasion. Every epic sentiment or heroic feeling is set aside for a wearisome labour of the pencil, that carries no enthusiasm with it, and fails to wake one stirring thought in the mind of the spectator. Nor are the works of Mr. Ward in the Commons' Corridor more impressive. Academical figures in theatrical costume are distributed freely on their surface; but for one touch of the heroic, one tender glimpse that appeals to anything beyond the eye, one single hint of that which "makes the whole world kin," we may look in vain. In the frescoes or wall-paintings of simpler times and peoples, conceived in a genuine art-atmosphere, one is often touched into unexpected emotion. Take, for instance, those of Fra Angelico in the convent of St. Mark at Florence. With the baldest simplicity of means, with the least complex system of expression which Art is capable of assuming, he has done so much that, in passing from one to another, all the finest feelings of the soul are awakened, and something like an unbidden tear will from time to time force itself into the eyes. Turn to the Arena Chapel or Municipal Hall at Padua. By what slight means are we moved! A few figures in various acts or amid circumstances in themselves not at all exciting—sometimes only a single figure—and our whole nature receives a new property, making fresh discoveries within itself; a glow suffuses the soul, the inner fountains of life and being are opened up, we rejoice in the painter and his work, and thank him for exciting within us new emotions of the purest kind. And why is all this? It is because these emotions are drawn from the painter's own soul; because he has only thought of his lines as conveying some spiritual message, and not at all as the means of putting together accurately constructed pictures. He has not approached his pictures from the side of lines, and hues, and figures, but having his mind filled with emotion by the circumstance of his representation, he has sought to express *that*, allowing the forms to arrange themselves in accordance with it in the best way they might. But in our modern English works we find no real sense of subject at all, not the least attempt on the part of the artist to unite himself with the centrality of his theme, and move us by the sheer force of its power. He abandons that entirely. He appeals to us by lines, composition, tex-

ture, colour; anything but the thing itself. We are called upon to look at the hand-work of the painter, not to be thrilled by his large feeling of a great event, not to be kindled into warmth with the new aspect in which he presents it to us, nor to have a fresh world of inward light revealed. These things are not the artist's object, but he does inform us that this is the same grass, these are the stones, whereon the event took place, and those the very dresses the personages wore on the occasion. This would be well enough, though unnecessary, under an overmastering enthusiasm, but as a substitute for the infinitely nobler part of the artistic work it is no more than the obscuring dust that settles on the sapless petals of a faded flower. We are none of us anyway the better for it; but in reality a great deal the worse: for under the semblance of truth it gives us a meaningless falsehood, a cold and heartless apology for a picture, a spiritless delineation for a soul-moving fact. All this elaboration of detail, and local and circumstantial verisimilitude is certainly not worth the sacrifice of every particle of artistic sentiment and spiritual force, or the impoverishment of a nation in all that appertains to a genuine and intelligent taste, and the utter annihilation of every æsthetic principle; yet this is what we are paying for it. As long as this pernicious dogma of an inflexible realism is held up before us in the kingdom of Art as a right and true one, it is impossible that we can expand in any more lofty direction. Under such a doctrine our eyes must constantly get more obscured with dark materialistic film, which presently will shut us in from every glimpse of the celestial vision, and effectually exclude us from participation in the "faculty divine."

Of a much better character than any of the already mentioned works are Mr. Dyce's frescoes, in the Queen's Robing Room, of some of the social and religious virtues, as embodied in the Arthurian legend. They are executed with a due regard to their vehicle, they are simple in their distribution, and sufficiently broad in their execution, their general tone is good; that is to say, that, without being dull or dark, they exactly keep their place on the wall: in this respect there is no attempt to vie with the scene-painter. They are not works, however, of very great power; there is no overmastering enthusiasm in them; the figures, too, are often stiff and awkward, showing that the painter was little at home in the manage-



ment of so large a surface and its requirements; a deficiency for which his time is as much responsible as himself.

Of the works in the House of Lords, which it is impossible to see in their full merits or demerits, on account of their situation, there appears to be nothing very important to add. Those of Mr. Maclise are conceived in the same chivalrous spirit which distinguishes his other paintings, partaking largely of the modern German manner, as interpreted by some of its most celebrated masters. Those of Mr. Cope do not show quite to so great disadvantage as his Corridor pictures; while Mr. Dyce, in his "Baptism of Ethelbert," still, perhaps, bears the palm in quietness and fitness of tone and keeping, but with the same stiffness and want of ease and naturalness in his figures before alluded to, and with a total want of true artistic manner and perception in the pictorial treatment of the architectural features of the scene. In all these works, however, there is almost an entire absence of that genuine heroic spirit, both in sentiment and execution, which ought to constitute the essential and overpowering quality of such works.

Mr. Watts's "Alfred inciting the Saxons to prevent the landing of the Danes," before mentioned, forms the chief ornament of one of the Committee Rooms; and its quiet tone, broad and diffusive manner, as well as agreeable and harmonious colour, show in favourable contrast to the other pictorial decorations of this chamber. It is on canvas, and very large, reminding one in many respects of the fine examples of the Venetian school. Nothing can be more commendable than the spirit in which this picture is produced. Perhaps Mr. Watts has done nothing better. Its modesty, reticence, and large grasp, both in arrangement and material, are highly creditable, and do honour to the place that the picture occupies.

Of the works in the Upper Waiting Hall, or Poets' Hall, as it has been called, so little remains, that, as we believe they were amongst the first paintings of the palace, and, therefore, may be considered tentative efforts rather than completed and conclusive performances, it will be only charitable to leave them in the hands of time, and hope for something greater and better when they have quite vanished from the walls.

We have thus completed a cursory survey of some of the principal works of

the Westminster Palace, of which it may be said that, on the whole, the national conclusion is, that its artistic decoration is a failure. Setting aside the intrinsic value of the works themselves, their utter inability to stand the climate and atmosphere of London is so forcibly thrust upon us, that the work has been all but abandoned. Mural painting in every form seems alike perishable, so that unless some other plan of decoration be suggested or discovered than that of using the wall surface, time, money, and trouble will be lost upon it. There are, however, at least two alternatives open to us: mosaic on the one hand, and canvas painting on the other. The latter might be removed at any time, and the safety of the painting would be more efficiently secured by its being detached than by its forming a part of the wall. The former—already respectfully inaugurated in Mr. Poynter's "St. George" (of which, perhaps, a little more might have been made)—would be indestructible; \* but it would only do for very broad designs, and these must be decorative as well as picturesque. But this would be infinitely better if done boldly and bravely, than either nothing at all, or the scabrous surfaces of mural pictures which now present so unsightly an appearance. We might at least have *ideas* before us, however broadly or generally expressed. There is no doubt that working in this material would contribute to largeness of conception and compel a dependence upon sound artistic qualities, since there would be no concealment of weakness in material, no glossing over incapacity of internal power by means of surface-texture, colour, or any other adventitious accessory. The work must be at least vigorous and intellectual, and be done from a high point of view, or its failure would be apparent, and its condemnation inevitable. If we adopted this method our oil-paintings might be preserved in more carefully-constructed galleries, removed from the deleterious influences of a building lighted with gas and on the banks of a river. As a precedent we might instance St. Peter's at Rome, almost all the large altar-pieces of which are executed in mosaic. Many of the churches also of Rome and Ravenna, to say nothing of St. Mark's at Venice, exhibit this kind of decoration with great nobility, power, and effect.

\* "Usava dire Domenico, la pittura essere il disegno, e la vera pittura per la eternità essere il mosaico."—*Vasari "Vita di Domenico Ghirlandajo."*



The other alternative is that of adopting canvas pictures in oil, which, when properly painted, are known to be indestructible by ordinary agents, always excepting the natural decay of time. This would allow the full play of artistic genius in a medium to which the public are accustomed, and with which painters are perfectly well acquainted. It might be done as well on a large scale as a small one. Some of the largest pictures in Venice are rendered in this material; and even for decorative purposes, when kept in a right tone, it offers quite as many advantages as the unproved means we have recently adopted, without the same danger of insecurity. It would be desirable, that the simplest earths and purest oils should be used, and allowed to get quite dry and hard before being submitted to the gaseous dampness of the Westminster walls.

Perhaps the great secret of the failure of the Westminster Palace paintings is an over-elaboration of means. With all the most durable frescoes of Italy the means of production were of the simplest. Fortunately the painters of the time at which they were executed did not know too much. With every complexity, every additional material, the danger is increased, the chances of permanency lessened. There have been far too much money, time, labour, and talk spent upon these works of ours. Even if we accept the present material as the best that could have been devised or thought of, the whole process of decorative painting is for the most part so thoroughly misunderstood, that their failure as works of Art in relation to place and purpose is equally signal. A few vigorous, unobtrusive strokes from the hand of a master (if such could be found) with a proper sense of fitness and propriety, struck out of the power within him, rather than indebted for their expression to the means without, would have been worth all the agglomerations of pigment and misdirected elaborations which, as a rule, rather disfigure than ornament the walls upon which they are laid. As an example of how much may be conveyed by the simplest means, we may instance the floor of the Cathedral at Siena, which is laid in two or three colours of marble. This material has been found sufficient to express some of the noblest scenes and circumstances of Scripture, with a force, vivacity, and grandeur, no trace of which is discernible in the overworked studies at Westminster. If these had only been

done, as we suggest, in a simpler manner, and made their appeal from the force of the idea conveyed, rather by a few grand lines than an infinitesimal number of pencil-touches and a realism which is alike inartistic and offensive, in case they had exhibited symptoms of decay, we might have afforded to lose some of their technical qualities, without the destruction of everything that was valuable in them; and even if they had gone altogether, we might have found an available power, if not able fully to supply their place, at least capable of giving us something from the same point of view. As it is, our failures remain to us a monument of our weakness and inability to meet what ought, in a nation possessed of our wealth and means of culture, to be a common and not at all an extraordinary occasion.

All that remains to us now of our prescribed task is to compare the modern English school of painting with another of universally accredited soundness and excellence, which embodies in the largest degree the general elements required for the formation of all good art, of whatever school or manner. These are chiefly harmony of colour, unity of line, directness of appeal and impressiveness of action, skilful massing, comprehensive and easy distribution, together with that union or fusion of all these qualities, which places every part of the work in a perfect consonance and agreement, both with itself and with the harmonies of nature, on whatever key the work may be constructed or in whatever relationship it may be viewed.

For this purpose there is room for a pretty wide selection among those distinguished for undoubted excellence: some of them, indeed, reaching to what would appear to be the utmost perfection of which their manner and material are capable; each differing from the other, nevertheless, in the broad ideal set before it: for the function of Art is various; it has many missions and many modes of fulfilling them. There is one school, however, universally allowed to combine more noble qualities than any other; and that is the Venetian school of the early part of the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries. In it culminated all the accumulated excellence of the best thinkers and workers, when Art was not an amusement nor a commercial business, but a mission of the soul, an inspiration from heaven, a vocation of the highest, by which the minds of men were fed with

lessons of wisdom and truth ; a serious calling, having an object before it real and definite, with no regard to merely pleasing the eyes of children and diletanti. Generally the subject was a religious one, sometimes social or ceremonial ; but in either case the object was always stern, solid, unmistakable in its end as it was decided and definite in its utterance. That this Art should have assumed its highest phase in Venice is neither inexplicable nor surprising. It was there, between sea and sky, that men's minds were touched by the loftiest and tenderest tones of thought. For who could see the wakening dawn stealing over the silent city, and not have his soul kindled by it ; or who could watch the glowing evening pour out his gold on turret and campanile, or the silvery moon rise above the blue lagoon, and not be soothed by it to tender and beautiful thoughts ? Who could go among her palaces, and see her robed senators and picturesque populace pass to and fro, and not long to paint them ? Every human emotion was pent within the city. Wealth and power found their fittest symbols in its rulers and its people. "Religion" assumed her most splendid garb. Nothing was wanting to generate and sustain the conditions, external and internal, of a noble school of art. It was inevitable that Venice should attain it.

It is far too late in the history of Art to begin to point out the special characteristics of the transcendent masters of this school—the subdued glory of Carpaccio, the glowing splendour of Titian, the titanic power of Tintoretto and Paul Veronese, the penetrating sweetness of John Bellini, the spiritual grace and stately simplicity of Palma Vecchio, the full-blown richness of Bonifazio and Giorgione—for they are already sufficiently well known. We will at once, therefore, enter on an analysis of their work in general, without actually instituting a close comparison with modern Art at every stage of the inquiry, but leaving the intelligent reader to form his own conclusions from that which we shall lay before him.

For the clearer elucidation of this part of our subject it will be better to divide it into three separate heads for consideration : first, the character of Venetian painting ; second, its manner ; third, the mechanical means used in its production. It may also be premised that the following observations will roughly embody the results of many months' very careful study

of the Venetian school of painting at Venice, where it can alone be studied to perfection. In the illustration, however, of the principles arrived at, we shall refer, whenever it is possible, to the works of the masters of this school in our National Gallery, or to those otherwise accessible to stay-at-home students.

First, then, as to character : by this is meant choice of subject and general mode of thinking. This had a wide range, but not an unlimited one. For instance, it never included the modern imitation for imitation's sake. It took no delight in furniture or fine clothes ; nor even in flowers and landscapes, except in so far as they were accessories to something, for them, infinitely more important : that is, to men and women. Not that the Venetians were incapable of producing these and every other object to the utmost perfection if they wished it. In the low-toned pictures of Bassano the various vessels, vegetables, viands and articles of domestic economy are reproduced with the faithfulness of a Dutch painting. They, however, centralized all their great powers on humanity, its feelings and emotions. The human face was the most lovely and interesting thing they could find, therefore they painted it again and again, and were never tired of painting it ; and although their interminable Madonnas and saints may be pronounced tedious by sacrilegious tourists, to the thoughtful student each face in the best pictures of these noble masters—many of them overflowing even to rapture with the most delicious tenderness of the sweetest of all earthly relationships, that of a mother, "the holiest thing alive,"—will speak with a new and powerful voice to him who listens to it.

It is hardly necessary to pursue this branch of the subject farther, since all are familiar with the Venetian character, as to choice and composition, by means of engravings, photographs, or other reproductions, even where the pictures from which they are taken are unknown.

Of its manner a little more may be said ; for, in a great measure, it was special and representative. It did not propose to itself many or diverse ends, but where it aimed it reached the mark. One is almost amazed at the simplicity of means these painters used. No sparkling lights flickered about their canvases, disturbing the mind and dazzling and perplexing the eyes of the spectator ; there were no spots of scattered colour to introduce distraction into their work and

act as barriers to the introduction of the mind into the heart of their conception, no fragments of light and shade to crown confusion with confusion, destroying repose and unity of appeal: for these was substituted an ordered assemblage of facts that the mind could take in at once, whose interest and fullness increased the more they were contemplated; a great massing by which one thing was never repeated in the same picture, nor two elements introduced into the same thing. If they painted a red dress, for example, its shadows were not laid in with purple or brown, nor its lights put on with purple or pink or blue; but it was what a red dress always is, red all over, and nothing else but red. Nor was there the least confusion or uncertainty in their lights or shadows. One part of their picture took the highest light, and was thus separated from all the rest: and there was one lowest shade or shadow distinguishing itself from every other. These give the keynote to their picture, and all the rest is in beautiful harmony without repetition and without confusion. Another secret of their power is, that their pictures were generally painted in planes: usually three or four; rarely more than five or six. These always harmonized with each other; so much so that they are not seen unless looked for, although the æsthetic faculty does not fail to make use of the explicitness the picture gains thereby. A few examples of this mode of treatment may be given, which any one can test by a visit to our National Gallery.

This simplicity of construction is very apparent in the central portion of the altar-piece by Girolamo Romani. It may be said to consist of five planes or compositional parts, distinctly separable as follows: 1. the whole of the figures above and below; 2. wall behind the figures; 3 and 4. landscape (including two planes); 5. sky. It will be observed in this picture the half-tints in the drapery of the Madonna are made little of, every part of it being correspondingly toned down to its proper plane, undisturbed by any foreign high lights or shadows. Again, Titian's "Venus and Adonis" is easily reducible to four elementary parts: the massing of the light figures; the dark trees; the dogs, forming the middle or connecting tone between them; and the sky. In the nameless picture of "A Warrior adoring Christ" we have in the first plane, the whole group of figures and horse; 2. the middle distance, comprising trees and landscape; 3. blue distance; 4. sky.

The "Bacchus and Ariadne" of Titian does not offer quite so simple an exposition of the rule; yet it is, nevertheless, sufficiently discernible: 1. figures and tree; 2. warm landscape; 3. blue distance; 4. sky. In the fine "Christ appearing to Mary" it is obvious enough: 1. figures; 2. landscape, with dark tree rising into the sky; 3. blue sea; 4. warm, rich sky.

Many more examples might be given of these simple reductions, but the above are sufficient for the purpose of illustration. In all Venetian Art of the great period they are conspicuous or traceable, and generally more or less so according to the greater or less power of the work. The value of this mode of looking at picturesque facts or material is a potency of appeal, a punctuation of purpose, so to speak, a solidity and grasp of expression which crushes the centrality of the picture into the mind of the observer with irresistible force and weight without the disturbance of impertinent detail or anything to divide the attention and interfere with its proper mission. The lesson to be learned from this is, that if a single flower has to be painted, it must be painted thoroughly, as for itself alone; that if a field has to be represented for its own sake, it must shine in all its wealth of colour and bloom—though, even here there is wide room for choice and selection\*—but that these and all other objects serving as accessories to a large subject or idea must be used only as adjuncts in which all distinctive treatment for their own sakes or for any speciality of execution will be more than thrown away, for it will be positively injurious. True Art never deifies her material at the expense of its significance. She makes her symbols inconsiderable that their meaning may be the plainer and more immediately penetrative, just as the master rhetorician who has anything to say worth the telling abandons the flowers of oratory for a simple statement of his ideas, well assured that if they are of a sterling sort, they will reach their mark more certainly and effectually by that means than any other. Thus Art will frequently make more of a pebble than a ruby, and out of pure reticence set aside her glistening silks for unobtrusive folds of sober serge, content to be nothing so that her end be accomplished, her mission well and faithfully executed.

\* Turner's "Crossing the Brook" and "Frosty Morning" in the National Gallery will show how much art, and a broad interpretation of nature, go to form the epic in landscape painting.

One reason for the present unimaginative want of largeness in English painting is undoubtedly the confusion of Art and Nature. The Art which influences men's minds the most permanently and in the largest degree is not even an attempted reproduction of nature as it really appears. The "Transfiguration" of Raphael has no pretensions to literal truthfulness of treatment in any part of it. Form and figure and fold express all that he wanted them to express, and nothing would have been gained by a closer following of nature and the life. It is not possible that one of the celebrated cartoons or Vatican frescoes could enter into the registry of fact; some of the figures in these works are even conventional types adopted from previous painters. Many of the most renowned pictures represent several stages of the same dramatic action. So little was actual reproduction or even verisimilitude aimed at by the greatest painters that those who stand highest in the best schools never scrupled to place names and inscriptions with the utmost ingenuousness on their works: and in this they were quite right; for they knew and felt that their Art was altogether something else than a poor apology for nature, and thus they threw it wholly on its own basis and bearing by getting rid of the notion that it was ever their intention or desire to approach the actual in any degree whatsoever. A Hamlet, a Sylvia, or a Desdemona, never existed in real life as Shakespeare has portrayed them. We never see people act, or hear them speak, precisely as they act and speak. Their prototypes, it is true, are found among us, but, we repeat, in no one particular are the characters of Shakespeare, or those of any true artist, mere draughts of those they have seen around them. This holds good from Æschylus to Michel Angelo, and from Michel Angelo to Walter Scott. Titian's tree is a painter's, not a naturalist's tree. It is an organism, but an organism of his own mind, not of nature. Even on his faces he has bestowed as much as he found in them. Nature must be the artist's servant, not his master: his language and expressional medium, not the ruler and usurper of his ideas; and if she must be reproduced at all, she must be translated through Art, not mimicked by artifice.

To return to the subject immediately under consideration, there is another means of gaining impressiveness sometimes made use of by the Venetian paint-

ers which is worth noticing. It is that of removing their figures or groups wholly from the background: not bestowing the light or shadow partly on the background and partly on the figure, but making the one altogether lighter or darker than the other. This, of course, is by no means a rule: but where it is used, it constitutes a great element of force and power. It is perhaps, however, more generally the case in regard to the distinctive separation of colour than light.

One of the most marvellous instances of power in order and mastery of breadth is the large picture of "Paradise" by Tintoretto in the Ducal Palace at Venice. It is said to be the largest picture ever painted upon canvas, and contains an innumerable number of faces and figures. Under any other treatment than that of one of these giants in Art such a picture must have been more or less in confusion: but it is not so here. Each of these sweet and heavenly faces is an individual, and yet the picture is made up of masses—is, indeed, simply constructed, considering the nature of the representation. It is painted in planes. There is a rich, dark, warm plane; there is a light and glowing one; there is a soft, tender, pearly-grey one: all separated from each other, all harmonized with each other, all contributing to make a picture as individual in its parts as it is grand in its entirety; a world brought by the painter's magic power into the compass of a canvas: one broad glance will see it as a picture; days of study will not exhaust its almost ungraspable wealth of material.

It has been said that the Venetian painters seldom disturbed their breadth of appeal by tints or tones other than local, or such as are produced by large conditions of circumstance: but this, it should be remarked, is not invariably the case. Sometimes in the draperies of Paul Veronese and Tintoretto we find varying elements introduced to a certain extent. This, however, does not invalidate the rule. They did it subject to the dominant idea of this law of breadth, and for that reason these variations did not disturb their pictures nearly so much as would be the case in a modern picture painted from no such centrality of principle. It ought to be observed that in their very finest works these freedoms are never introduced. If we compare the "Adoration of the Magi" of Paul Veronese in our National Gallery with its (for him) unusual number of scattered

lights, with the broader and grander "Family of Darius before Alexander," we see how much majesty and power is gained by their absence. The four masterpieces of Tintoretto in the Guard Room of the Ducal Palace at Venice, "Bacchus and Ariadne," the "Three Graces," and their companion pictures, are characterized by the most perfect repose in this respect; as are also the fine "Europa" of Paul Veronese, and almost all the works on the walls and ceiling of that wonderful art treasury. Whatever liberties they may have permitted themselves, they never for a moment forgot their keynote or outstepped the tonic limits of their picture.

It remains to say something of the third part of our subject: of the Venetian painters' means or manipulatory mode of expressing their ideas. A studious inspection of their works will render it apparent that many of their finest qualities, particularly as regards tone, were obtained by a skilful use of their ground. This ground appears to have been laid in with transparent colour without any admixture of white: not flat, but indicating with more or less precision the ultimate tones of the picture. Whenever it is visible, it is rich, warm, and low-toned: never blue, grey, or cold. The painting upon this has been very thin, except in the high lights: sometimes, from a clear knowledge of the use of the ground, a mere whisk of the brush has been all that was necessary. Over this a final glaze has been sometimes given, generally rather sparing and tender than copious. In the "Miracle of St. Mark," by Tintoretto, and the "Fisherman Presenting the Ring to the Doge," by Paris Bordone, in the Accademia, it would seem as if the whole tone of the picture had been modified by a flat warm glaze: but, we believe, in the one instance it is known to have been applied subsequently to the painter's lifetime; possibly this may also have been the case with the other. Be this as it may, there is no doubt that the real value of the pictures of this school lies in a great measure beneath, not on the surface. This may be proved, firstly from a very instructive picture by Titian in the Gallery of the Uffizi at Florence, of the "Madonna and Child" (which appears to have been a study for his large "Pesaro Family" in the church of the Frati at Venice). The work is little more than commenced, and it is seen that the ground is laid in with a somewhat broken,

but very rich pinky grey. It has then received a first painting in parts, the half-tones being got from the ground, which has been thinly painted or scumbled over; or, in some parts, scarcely touched at all. If he had finished the picture, judging from precedent, he never would have lost these. In the "Three Ages," in the Doria Palace in Rome, he has made large uses of his ground. The piece of blue drapery which covers the loins of the youth seated is only a little bluish semi-transparent grey passed lightly over the ground of his canvas.\*

Many examples of this mode of treatment might be adduced from Tintoretto, who frequently owes the principal power of his picture to it, as far as manipulatory treatment goes. Two may be given. One, the Angel's head in his "Paradise" in the Ducal Palace, at the bottom in the centre of the picture. If examined carefully and closely, it will be seen to consist of a few light sweeps of pearly pink or grey over the deep, rich, warm ground of the canvas. It leaves nothing to be desired in colour, sentiment, and tenderness. The other example is in those marvels of manipulation in the foreground of the "Miracle of St. Mark," a broken axe, a hammer, a splinter of wood, and a piece of rope. Within the proper limit of observation, they scarcely seem to be painted at all; there is a dab of the brush for a shadow, a touch for the high light, and that is all, except the final glaze before alluded to, which appears to go over the whole picture. At the right distance, however, all of them come into perfect roundness and solidity, as if they might be picked up. Yet there is nothing vulgar in the imitation of these objects, owing to the large manner in which they are done. In the painting of them, it should be noted, Tintoretto has not used the first ground, but the already painted foreground of the picture. By this means, on the same system as if the former had been the basis, he has got the form of the object, its shadow, reflected light: everything, in fact, but the high light, which is just touched on with a bit of opaque colour. There is a remarkable

\* We do not remember if the same thing is observable in the replica of this picture in the Bridgewater Collection.

It may be remarked that the mode of painting described above was not limited to the Venetian school, but was used by others scarcely less celebrated. There was a picture by Velasquez in the last Winter Exhibition of the Works of Old Masters at Burlington House, begun in the same way. There are also a head by Van Dyck in Rome, and a picture by Leonardo da Vinci at Florence, laid-in in a similar manner.



instance of the painter's power over the faculty of vision in one of the splinters of the handle of the axe (not the one with the high light), which he has only indicated, commenced as it were, relying on the eye of the spectator to point it, which it actually does ; for what the eye seems to perceive at the proper distance vanishes altogether on a nearer approach. Another proof of what is stated above may be found in the "Widow of Nain" by Palmer Vecchio in the Accademia at Venice. In this picture, which is painted on the panel, there is a head in the background which consists entirely of the ground colour, just touched here and there as thinly as possible for the lighter parts. It is evident also that the later pictures of John Bellini were painted in the same manner. This is apparent in the three pictures collocated in the Sacristy of the Redentore at Venice, one in his earliest, another in his transitional, and the third in his perfected manner. The first has been painted without any preparation ; the second appears to have received it ; in the third a rich, low-toned ground has been used ; with what advantage — aided, it is true, by a more finely developed sentiment — he who has seen those sweet eyes which look into the soul of the observer will clearly be able to judge. The same thing is also illustrated in the noble "Madonna and Six Saints" by this painter in the Accademia.

Although these latter observations are derived from notes made in Venice, a reference to such of the works of the painters mentioned above as are to be found in our National Gallery will illustrate more or less clearly the views here laid down.

It must, however, be distinctly understood that there is no method of painting that should exclude all others ; also that the painters whose works are here quoted as illustrating principles might not always and invariably have followed the same system. It is enough if it be proved that therein lay their greatest force and highest speciality, and that they were educationally influenced by such a mode of painting where they did not absolutely or exclusively follow it.

We have thus examined some of the external elements of the power which characterizes the painting of these great men : but, of course, their real vital force lay within. This is not a thing of sense and mechanism at all, and any portion of it is only to be attained by profound

æsthetic and spiritual training. Weighed in respect of this quality of force, our own Art shows itself lamentably insufficient. The study of the artistic mission — of what should properly constitute its expressional aim — seems to be almost utterly disregarded. Not even is the picture always, perhaps hardly generally, thought out substantially and clearly before its commencement. With all great schools the reverse is always the case, whatever alterations may be subsequently made. The Venetians always began with an exact knowledge of what had to be done, alterations on their canvases being rare, and commonly limited to the direction of a line ; seldom or never to a whole figure or group. The simplicity of the means used and the thinness of the painting generally render these alterations perceptible where they have been made. With many of our modern painters it is vastly different : a want of certainty of plan, both in regard to manipulation and conception, involving so many changes as to almost destroy all delicacy and tenderness of workmanship. Indeed it is pretty evident that many must depend entirely on their pencil (as a spurious composer of music on his instrument) and the adventitious aid of externals, even for the sentiment and motive of their pictures, as far as they can be said to have sentiment or motive at all. There is clearly no distinct mental image formed to begin with, which makes every step towards its realization an ordered progress undisturbed by any uncertainty of plan. All genuinely great Art, however imperfect in its means, or deficient in technical skill, must be definite and firm in intention. The thoughtful and laborious workmen who have covered the walls of St. Mark's at Venice with their quaint and fanciful designs have been perfectly regardless of their own shortcomings in the plastic language ; but their ideas are not the less clearly set before us on that account — indeed they are perhaps sometimes more impressive from the simplicity and inadequacy of their expressional faculty : they are certainly more touching. Should any one come before us as a spokesman or in a literary capacity, we expect he has something to tell us, and accordingly look for something more than a skilful use and arrangement of words and phrases ; but the artist of to-day has no misgivings in coming forward with no other object than to display a clever use of his material and to exercise his power of picturesque management : that is to say, these



are the primary object of his effort, and not secondary, as they ought to be. His work is not an attempt to dress up a noble or worthy idea in the best form, but a struggle to obtain some resemblance to a central motive from the mere shifting of lines and varying shades of colour; so that often enough, when he has completed his picture, he is so vague as to his own meaning or intention in producing it that he does not even know what to call it, or what special significance to impute to it. The most trivial and worthless subjects are made the medium of all the art-dexterity he possesses, and the lay public must be content with his jejune trifles as the best that the noble vehicle of painting has in its power to convey and express. In place of the coolness and tranquillity of a dignified ease, the true and artistic interpretation of nature, a refined grace of treatment, a sentiment of colour which never forgets either tone or harmony—all softened and soothed by the artistic eye, we have scoriated portraits, mechanically disposed folds of drapery, photographic transcripts of nature, coarse masses of pigment, frequently not only struggling to outdo every other extravagance, but actually so reckless in the utter abandonment of consistency as to make one part of the picture play against the other; introducing all possible keys within the limits of the same canvas; thus crowning disorder with confusion.

Doubtless one reason why form and external phenomena are now so exclusively dwelt upon is, that painters, having so little of their own to say, are fain to take refuge among the verities they see around them, and allow themselves to be made the mirror of the mere appearances of things. It is an abuse very difficult to rectify, seeing that the appearances of objects must inevitably form the substantial basis of everything done in plastic Art. It is impossible, therefore, to define exactly from the outside how much of the literality of nature must enter into any given form of Art. The true workman, however, will have no difficulty in practically solving the question: for he will use precisely so much of nature as may be required for his own expression. He will be just so literal as to obtain a clear and precise language for his utterance, and so ideal as to keep himself free from anything approaching to an enslaving materialism. He will avoid scholasticism and pedantry in externals in order to gain force for his central meaning.

Towards this end the art-workman will acquire more from his observation than from his pencil, with whatever persistency this may be used. Form and pictorial circumstance will have for him the importance of a scientific study. With a mind well stored with observation and reflection, he will be enabled to produce the forms of nature with a wider meaning, ensouling them with so much of his own spirit as will impress them with a new force and aspect on the minds of others. This will not be found an easy mode of study: in fact it will prove far more difficult than that of the pencil; but it will have upon the workman all the power of a moral training, and will develop and bestow the better and the nobler elements and gifts of Art; it will need an unifying devotion, calling forth the most refined and subtle perception, together with a constant exercise of the reflective powers to ennoble and glorify the drudgery of imitation by the vivifying light of Law. The artist of this elevated type will not look at Nature with the eye of a casual observer, but he will commune with her in all her aspects as an intimate and inseparable friend, admitted, as it were, into her arcana and secret workshop. She will teach him her principles, she will show him her resources, informing him of her width and vastness; so that he will become a sort of ambassador or delegate of her powers, an interpreter of her laws and her expressions, not merely an imitator of her appearances and accidents. In his early training he may give himself frankly to a thoughtful reproduction of her forms and conditions with this higher sentiment behind his labour; just as the literary man or the orator practises himself upon various models in the use of his language; but he will never mistake the repetition of the symbol for the ultimate object of his art, nor lose the essence in the substance, the spirit in the letter.

It does not lie within the compass of these observations to enter into any wide consideration of what ought to constitute the proper mission of Art, beyond what has been embodied in the course of our enquiry. It is enough here to say that it is but the function of something infinitely more noble than all Art: that however much it says, it must always leave immeasurably more unspoken; that the right artist must be greater than anything he does or can do, having that within him to which the outward can only offer a more or less inadequate means of expres-

sion; feeling that something better still lies behind his best, and being able to say with all true and worthy ministers of the ideal,

Howso'er the figures do excel,  
The gods themselves with us do dwell.\*

\* Andrew Marvell.

From The Graphic.

# INNOCENT:

## A TALE OF MODERN LIFE.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT, AUTHOR OF "SALEM CHAPEL,"  
"THE MINISTER'S WIFE," "SQUIRE ARDEN," ETC.

### CHAPTER XV.

#### A SUNDAY AT HOME.

INNOCENT, it may well be supposed, had been thrown into the shade by these great events in Nelly's history, and yet she was, notwithstanding, a most important element in the discomfort which began to creep into the house. The very first day after her arrival she had begun her strange career. Brought down stairs for meals she would sit very quietly, eating or pretending to eat what was offered to her—and much of what was offered to her was so strange to her that she fared but badly, poor child, until a new habit had begun to form, and the wholesome appetite of youth had driven away her prejudices. It is a whimsical thought, and one which we are aware the British intellect in general declines to contemplate, that frog-eating foreigners, or those still more miserable specimens of humanity who are brought up upon macaroni and polenta, should not when they come among us take any more enthusiastically to our richer fare than we do to theirs; but yet, strange to say, this is unquestionably the case—and poor Innocent had very little to eat for the first few days, not knowing the looks of things, and hesitating, as the inexperienced always do, to venture upon the unknown. When the meal was over, unless absolute moral force was exerted to restrain her, she escaped at once to her own room, her constant occupancy of which became at once a standing grievance of the housemaid, who immediately settled in her mind that this unusual course of procedure was suggested by an ardent desire to spy upon her movements, and to report her imperfections to her mistress. There were countless complaints from this quarter about the impossibility of "cleaning out"

Miss Innocent's room, or even of "cleaning out" Miss Ellinor's room, which adjoined, or, in short, of doing anything whatever under the constant inspection of the stranger's eyes. What with this offence against the housemaid of being constantly in her bed-room, and the offence against the cook of never being satisfied with anything at table, and the offence against Brownlow of paying no attention to his intimations that dinner was ready, Innocent was in bad odour with all the servants except Alice, who stood by her quietly, without any warmer applause, however, than that there was no "hairm in the girl." In the higher regions Innocent made a still more puzzling and painful impression. When she could be retained among them she sat dumb in a corner, generally near one of the windows, saying nothing, answering Yes and No to the questions addressed to her, doing nothing, presenting a blank impenetrable surface of silence to all the attempts at friendly intercourse made by the lively and genial group which she intruded herself amongst like a figure of stone. She would obey when absolutely commanded, and for the immediate moment of command—but then only as by machinery, without the least appearance of entering into the spirit of the directions given her, or wishing to please, or desiring to bring herself into accord with her surroundings. No idea indeed of putting herself in accord with her surroundings seemed ever to enter into her mind. She was an alien in her own consciousness, altogether untouched by the distress, the vexation, the bewilderment, caused by her self-isolation. Perhaps if, as Mrs. Eastwood said, they had been able to love the girl heartily, and by nature, without any action of hers to call it forth, they might have thawed the snow-image. But beyond the natural bounds of the family, love ceases to be given in this instinctive causeless way, and nobody can long resist the repellant effect of a perpetual non-response. The girl was a worry and vexation to Mrs. Eastwood and Nelly, and she was the cause of much suppressed merriment to Dick, who held that she was sulky, and giving herself airs, and ought to be laughed at. Jenny, as the reader has been informed, looked at the matter in a more philosophical way; but neither nature nor philosophy threw any light upon the darkness, or suggested any way of mending the matter. The strange girl in their midst occupied the ladies (before the moment of

Nelly's engagement) perpetually. They took her out, they tried to amuse her, they tried to sympathize with her, they asked countless questions, and elicited many details of her former life, but they never moved her with all their pettings and coaxings to say one word to them, or to stay one moment with them longer than she was compelled.

This was the outside aspect of affairs, as seen by those surrounding her, who were much discouraged in every way by the strange passiveness of the newcomer; but to Innocent herself the world bore a different appearance, as may be supposed. She had been brought up in utter solitude; her father, who cared little for her, and took little notice of her, and Niccolo, who had done everything, were the two sole figures with which she was familiar. Other human forms she had seen going about the streets, gliding round her in a strange dull phantasmagoria, without touching her. Her intellect was feeble, or so partially awakened that she had never yet begun to think of her own position either present or future, or connection with the rest of humanity. All that life had yet been to her was a window through which she had seen other people, bearing no connection with herself, moving about with mysterious comings and goings through a world not realized. She had watched them with a certain dull wonder. Their occupations and their activity surprised without interesting her. Why should they take so much trouble, why keep so constantly in motion? And then the whirlwind had seemed to seize herself, to whirl her through air and space, through a still stranger phantasmagoria—moving pictures of sea and land, and to set her down in the very heart of one of those strange groups of people who were so unlike anything she had ever known, people who clustered together and talked and laughed and had a great deal to do with each other, but among whom she felt as strange as a stray olive leaf dropped among the cast-off garments of English beech and elm. She could not mix with them. She felt no interest in what they did or said, and had no desire to feel any interest. She was even secretly vexed, as much as her dulled nature would allow, by all the care taken of her, the demands which she was daily conscious they made, the disappointment with her irresponsiveness, which more or less they all showed. Why could not they let her alone? She had not, as Nelly sometimes supposed, any conven-

tional prepossession in her mind, or feeling that she, the penniless niece and dependent, must be of necessity, slighted and kept down, an idea which does take possession of some natures, and cause much unreasonable mischief. Such a notion, however, was much too complicated, much too profound for the mind of Innocent. It was not so much that she had a false impression about her relationship with them as that she had no real conception of any relationship at all. She accepted her external surroundings mechanically, without even asking herself what right she had to be an inmate of her aunt's house, or to be cared for as she was. Gratitude was more than impossible to her; she did not know what the word meant. She had never asked to be brought to Mrs. Eastwood's house; it occurred to her in her ignorance that she would rather have stayed in Pisa, but it never occurred to her to ask why she could not stay in Pisa, why Niccolo had been sent away, and she brought here. She had never possessed more than a franc or two in her life, and had no idea of the value of money or its necessity. In short, the development of her mind was rather that of six than sixteen. Nothing was formed in her except the striking personality and individuality that shut her up within herself as within a husk, and kept her from mingling with others. This absence of all capability of thought or feeling, this perfect blank and stupefaction of intellect and heart, took away from her all that lively sense of novelty, all that interest in the unknown which is so strong and so beneficent in youth. She did not ask to understand either the things or persons round her. She accepted them duly, as she would have accepted any other order of things; they did not affect her at all; they moved her neither to love nor to hatred, scarcely even to wonder; through them all she pursued her own dull way, crossed by these other threads of existence perforce, but never entangling with them, or allowing herself to be woven into the common web. Their out-cries and laughter, their manifestations of feeling, their fondness for each other, the perpetual movement of life among them, affected her only with a vague surprise too faint for that lively title, and a still more languid contempt. She had nothing in common with them; they were, it seemed to her, restless, afflicted with a fever of activity, bound by some treadmill necessity to talk, and walk, and

move about, and be always doing, of which her frame and mind were totally unconscious. A vague resentment against them—the girl scarcely knew why—for disturbing her with their companionship, and subjecting her to such strange demands for a sympathy which she had not to give, and an affection for which she felt no need, gave a certain reality to the mistiness of her sensations. But that was all? she came among them like a thing dropped out of another sphere, having no business, no pleasure, nothing whatever to do or to learn upon this alien earth.

But there was an exception to this rule. Innocent clung to Frederick as a savage might cling to the one white man who had brought her out of her woods from among her people into the strange and beautiful world of civilized life. She knew him, though she knew no one else. Frederick was her revelation, her one discovery out of the darkness which surrounded every other nature. She formed no very close or distinct estimate of him, but at least she was conscious of another existence which affected her own, and upon which she was to some degree dependent. When Mrs. Eastwood found her lurking in the hall in the cold and darkness, waiting for Frederick, an immediate and full-grown love tale glimmered before the unfortunate mother's eyes, filling her with dismay. But Innocent's thoughts had taken no such form. She was as unconscious of love as of any other passion, and had as little idea of anything to follow as a baby. It was, however, her only point of human interest, the sole thing which drew her out of herself. When Frederick was present she had eyes only for him; when he spoke, she listened, not much understanding what he said, but vaguely stimulated by the very sound of his voice. When he told her to do anything she made an effort to bring her mind to bear upon it, and somehow took in what he said. The moment when he came home was the moment to which she looked forward the whole day through. A vague sense that he understood her, that he did not ask too much from her like the others, made no bewildering demand on her comprehension, but accepted what she gave with a matter-of-fact simplicity equal to her own, gave her confidence in him. Could she have been with Frederick alone she would have been happy; or would he even have permitted her to sit close to him, or hold his hand while the

bewildering conversation of others—conversation which they expected her to join in and understand—was going on around, Innocent would have been more able to bear it. This, however, he had privately explained to her could not be.

"When we are alone I do not mind," he said, with a condescension which suited his natural temper, "but when we are with the others it makes you ridiculous, Innocent; and what is more, it makes me ridiculous. They laugh at both you and me."

"Why should they laugh?" asked the girl.

"Because it is absurd," he said, frowning. "I cannot allow you to make me a laughing-stock. Of course, as I tell you, I don't mind so much when we are alone."

And he stroked her hair with a caressing kindness which was at that time about the best sentiment in the young man's mind. He was often embarrassed by her, and sometimes had asked himself the question, What on earth was it to come to? for he too, like his mother, believed that Innocent was in love with him; and the love of such a girl, so manifested, was more absurd than gratifying. But yet he was always kind to her. Evil impulses enough of one kind and another were in his mind, and he could have made of this girl anything he pleased, his slave, the servant of his will in any way. But he never treated her otherwise than as his little sister, and was kind, and put up with her demonstrative affection, and did his best to advise her "for her good."

"You must not shrink so from my mother and Nelly," he said. "They want to be kind to you. If you could only take to them it would be much better for you than taking to a fellow like me—"

"I don't like women," said Innocent. "My father always said so. I cannot help being one myself, but I hate them. And nobody is like you."

"That is very pleasant for me," said Frederick, "but you must not keep up that notion about women. Your father was a capital judge, I have no doubt, but he might have taught you something more useful. Depend upon it, you will never be happy till you make friends with your own sex. They may be dangerous to men, though men are not generally of your opinion," continued the moralist, "but for you, Innocent, mark my words, it is far your best policy to make the women your friends."

"What is policy?" she asked, stealing

her hand into his, much as a dog puts his nose into his master's hand.

"Pshaw!" said Frederick. His mother had come into the room, and had seen this pantomime. "You ought to be put to school and learn English," he added, somewhat roughly. "I don't believe she understands half of what we say."

"Indeed, I should not be sorry to think so," said Mrs. Eastwood, not without severity in her tone. But the severity was lost upon Innocent. She understood, as she did always by some strange magic understand Frederick, that she was now to withdraw from him, and do her best to appear indifferent. It was a Sunday afternoon, rainy and miserable—and a rainy Sunday afternoon, when English domestic virtue shuts up all its ordinary occupations, is, it must be allowed, a dreary moment. I do not at all agree in the ordinary conventional notion of the dreariness of English Sundays generally, but I allow that a Sunday afternoon, when all the good people are at home, when the children are forbidden to play, and the women's work is carefully put away, as if innocent embroidery were sin, and the men do not know what to do with themselves, is trying. It you are musical to the extent of Handel you may be happy, but the only thing to be done otherwise in a good orthodox respectable family bound by all the excellent English traditions, is to pick a quarrel with some one. About five o'clock or so, with the rain pouring steadily down into the garden, the flower-beds becoming puddles before your eyes, the trees looking in upon you like pitiful ghosts—if you have not dared the elements, and gone to afternoon church, you must quarrel or you must die.

Mrs. Eastwood felt the necessity. She called Frederick close to her, and she addressed him in an undertone. Innocent had gone away, and placed herself in a chair close by the window. She had not even "taken a book"—the impossibility of making her ever "take a book" was one of the miseries of the house. She was gazing blankly out upon the rain, upon the trees that shivered and seemed to ask for shelter, and the beds, where a draggled line of closed-up crocuses were leaning their bosoms upon the mud. Her beautiful profile was outlined distinctly against the pale gray dreary light. It was a beautiful profile always, more beautiful than the full face, which wanted life. Blank as the day itself was her counte-

nance, with that motiveless gaze which was, indeed, almost mystic in its absolute want of animation. Her hands were crossed upon her lap, her whole limp, girlish figure seemed to sympathize with the dreariness outside. Mrs. Eastwood looked with a mixture of pity, sympathy, and disapproval at this apathetic, immovable being, so self-absorbed, and yet so childish and pitiful in her self-absorption. She drew Frederick to her, and laid her hand upon his arm.

"Frederick, look there," she said in a low tone, "if you were not in the room Innocent would rush off upstairs. She stays only for you. I saw you just now with her as I came in. For God's sake take care what you are about. You are turning that child's head."

"Bah! nonsense," said Frederick, freeing himself with a complacent smile.

"It is not nonsense. I have watched her since ever she came. She has neither eyes nor ears but for you."

"Is that my fault?" said Frederick, making a motion as if to break away.

"I do not say it is your fault. Stop and hear what I have to say. It was very good of you, no doubt, to be so kind to her on the journey, to gain her confidence—"

"Your words are very nice, mother," said Frederick, "but your tone implies that it was anything but good of me, as if I had gained her confidence with an evil intention—"

"Frederick! how dare you put such a suggestion into my lips? If I were to answer you as you deserve, I should say that only a guilty mind could have thought of such a thing, or thought that I could think of it," cried Mrs. Eastwood, becoming involved in expression as she lost her temper. This heat on both sides was entirely to be attributed to the Sunday afternoon. On arriving so near the brink of the quarrel as this, Mrs. Eastwood paused.

"Sunday is not a day for quarrelling," she said, "and heaven knows I have no wish to quarrel with any one, much less my own boy; but Frederick, dear, you must let me warn you. You do not know the world as I do" (Heaven help the innocent soul!) "nor how people are led on further than they have any intention; nor how the simplest kindness on your part may affect the imagination of a girl. She is not much more than a child—"

"She is an utter child—and a fool besides," said Frederick, throwing the female creature about whom he was being



lectured, overboard at once, as a sacrifice to the waves, according to the wont of man.

"I would not say that," said Mrs. Eastwood, doubtfully. "She is a very strange girl, but I do not like to think she is a fool; and as for being a child—a child of sixteen is very near a woman—and, my dear, without meaning it, without thinking of it, you might do a great deal of harm. With a brooding sort of girl like this, you can never tell what may be going on. If she was to speak out and say what she is thinking like my Nelly—"

"Nelly! Well, to do her justice, she is very different from Nelly," said Frederick, with that natural depreciation of his sister which is also usual enough, and which was largely increased by Sunday-afternoonishness.

"No, indeed, she is not like Nelly, more's the pity," said Mrs. Eastwood, fortunately not detecting the injurious tone. "She is so shut up in herself that you can never tell what may be going on within her. I am sure you don't mean it, Frederick, but sometimes I think, for Innocent's own sake, it would be better if you were not quite so kind. I don't like her waiting for you in the hall, and that sort of thing. There is no harm in it I know—but I don't like it. It is always an unpleasant thing to have ideas—which she would be better without—put into a girl's head."

"You are too mysterious for me to follow," said Frederick. "What ideas? If you will be a little more plain in your definition—"

She was his mother, and thought she knew a great deal more than he did about life; but she blushed as red as a girl at this half contemptuous question.

"Frederick, you know very well what I mean," she said, quickly, "and I hope you will not try to make me sorry that I have appealed to you at all. You may make Innocent more fond of you than will be good for her, poor child, and that can produce nothing but unhappiness. I am not finding fault, I am only warning you. Her I cannot warn, because she so shuts herself up. She is a mystery," said poor Mrs. Eastwood, shaking her head.

"Whip her," said Frederick, with a little scornful laugh; and he walked off to the library, where Dick was pretending to read, and really teaching Winks, who had been having a *mauvais quart d'heure*, and whose patience was so utterly exhausted that nothing but his regard for

the family could have kept him from snapping. Winks made his escape when the door was opened, and rushed to the drawing-room, where nobody was allowed to insult his intellect by tricks. He came and sat up before his mistress on his hind legs, waving his feathery forepaws in expostulation. She understood him, which is consolatory alike to dogs and men. The tears had come into her eyes at the unkind scorn of Frederick's tone, but this other complaint brought a little laughter and carried off the sharpness. "Yes, Winks, they are wicked boys," she said, half laughing, half crying. Dick declared after that Winks had been "sneaking," and I think the dog himself was a little ashamed of having told; but it did the mother good, and set her thinking of her Dick, who was not too bright, nor yet very industrious, but the honestest fellow!—and that thought made her laugh, and healed the little prick in her heart.

#### CHAPTER XVI.

##### INNOCENT'S FIRST ADVENTURE.

INNOCENT had remained quite unconscious that she was the subject of this conversation. She was still a little in doubt even of the words of a dialogue carried on by others. The quickness of utterance which strikes every one when hearing an unaccustomed language, the half completed phrases, the words half said, confused her mind, which was not equal to such a strain, and her want of interest in the matter limited her comprehension tenfold more. She sat with her profile marked out against the light, the line of the curtains falling just beyond her, the garden furnishing a vague background, until some time after Frederick had left the room. She had scarcely moved while she sat there; there was nothing to look at, nothing to occupy her, but that did not matter to Innocent. When Frederick was gone she, too, moved a little, and after a few minutes stole out and upstairs like a ghost. She went to her room, stealing through Nelly's, where her cousin was occupied about some of the little legitimate Sunday employments which a good English girl may permit herself on a rainy Sunday. Nelly made some little friendly observation, but Innocent glided past, and closed the door upon her. Innocent, however, had nothing to do; she sat down by the fireplace, where, Mrs. Eastwood being extravagant in this particular, there burned a cheery little fire. But the fire was no comfort to

her. So far as she had any feeling at all, she disliked the warm little room, with all its cushions and curtains, and its position so close to her cousin's. Now and then she thought of the cold and bare rooms at the Palazzo Scaramucci, so large and empty, and lonely, with something like a sigh. Her life there, which was so void of any interest, so blank and companionless, came back upon her as if it had been something better, more natural than this. There no one bade her talk, bade her do anything; no one cared what she was about. She might stand for hours at the window, looking out, and no one would chide her, or ask why she did so. Books and music, and such perplexing additions to life, had no existence there: and in Pisa there was room enough to move about, and air enough to breathe. With the help of a scaldino, and the old velvet cloak, which she kept in her box now, she had been able to keep the cold at bay; but here she grew drowsy over the fire, and had no need for her cloak. There, too, she might do what she pleased, and no one ever said, Why?—no one, except Niccolo, who did not matter. Whereas now she could not go in or out of her room without being observed, without having somebody to peep at her, and to say, "Ah, it is you." What did it matter who it was? If people would but let her alone! I do not know how long she had been alone, shut up in the little room, when Nelly knocked at the door. During the short time since Innocent's arrival Nelly had gone through a great many different states of mind respecting her. She had been eager, she had been sympathetic, she had been sorry, she had been angry, and then she had recommenced and been sympathetic, sorry, and indignant again. The only thing Nelly could not do, though she advised her mother with great fervour to do it, was to let the stranger alone.

"Leave her to herself, Mamma," Nelly said with precocious wisdom, "let us have patience, and by-and-by she will see that we mean her nothing but good, and she will come to herself."

This was admirable advice if Nelly herself could only have taken it. But she could not; a dangerous softness would come over her at the very height of her resolution. She would say to herself, "Poor Innocent, how lonely she must be!" and would go again and commit herself, and endeavour in another and yet another way to melt the unmeltable. On this Sunday she had begun the day very

strongly in the mind that it was best to leave Innocent alone; but the sight of the pale girl gliding past, escaping to her solitude, shutting herself up alone, was too much for Nelly. The soft-hearted creature resisted her impulse as long as possible, and then she gave in. Surely this time there must be an opening somehow to the shut-up heart. She knocked softly at the closed door, which, indeed, Innocent had almost closed upon her. "May I come in?" she said softly. It was not easy to make out the answer which came reluctantly from within; but Nelly interpreted it to mean consent. She went in and sat down by the fire, and began to talk. It was before her engagement, and she had not that one unfailing subject to excite Innocent's interest upon, if that were possible; but she chattered as only a well-conditioned good-hearted girl can do, trying to draw the other from her own thoughts. Then she proposed suddenly an examination of the house. "You have never been over the house, Innocent; come, there is no harm in doing that on Sunday. There is a whole floor of attics over this, and the funniest hiding holes; and there are some curiosities, which if we only could find room for them, are well worth seeing. Are you fond of china, or pictures? Tell me what you like most."

"No," said Innocent, "nothing."

"Oh, that is just because you don't know. China is my delight. If I had my way I would cram the drawing-room; but Mamma is no true connoisseur; she likes only what is pretty. Come along, and I will show you the house."

Innocent rose, more to avoid controversy than from any interest in the house. Nelly showed her a great many interesting things in the attics; an old screen, which you or I, dear reader, would have given our ears for; a whole set of old oak furniture, which had once been in the library; old prints, turned with their faces to the wall; and one or two family portraits. The girl moved quite unaffected through all these delights. She neither knew their value nor saw their beauty. She answered Nelly's questions with Yes or No, and vaguely longed to get away again. To do what?—nothing. Once, and only once, she was moved a little. It was when Nelly introduced her into the old school-room, a bare room, with a sloping roof, and two windows, looking away over the elms to the suburban road some distance off, which led into London, and showed moving specks of figures,

carriages and people, diminished by the distance, over the bare tops of the trees. There were neither curtains nor carpets in this bare place. It was cold and deserted, apart from the other rooms, up a little staircase by itself. Innocent gave a cry of something like pleasure when she went in. "I like this room," she said, and it was about the first unsuggested observation she had made since her arrival. "May I come and live here?"

"Here! far away from us all?" cried Nelly, "with no furniture, no pictures, nothing to make you cheerful! It would seem like banishment to put you here. You do not mean to say you like this bare little place?"

"Yes," said the girl, "I can breathe here. I can see out of the windows; and I should not trouble anybody. I like this best."

"Innocent, you must not talk of troubling anybody. All that troubles us is when we think you are not happy."

"I should be happy here," she said, wistfully, sitting down on the ledge of the window, which was low, and turning her gaze to the distant road.

"Oh, Innocent!" said Nelly, half inclined to cry in her disappointment; "if you knew how much I wished to make your room pretty, how I worked at it, and how anxious Mamma and I were to make it look like home to you! We thought you would feel less lonely if you were close to us, and felt that we were within call night and day. We hoped you would grow fond of us, Innocent! You don't really mean that you would like to get away from mamma and me?"

To this appeal Innocent made no immediate answer. She looked far away over the tree tops, and watched the omnibuses, crawling like flies along the road. It was not a beautiful or exciting sight, but it soothed her somehow, like "the woven paces and the waving hands" of Merlin's spell—the subtle influence of motion apart from herself, which acted upon her like a cadence and rhythm. Then she said slowly as if to herself, "I like this best."

"Oh, you cold-hearted, unkind thing!" cried impetuous Nelly, growing red and angry. "After all we have done and tried to do to make you comfortable! Don't you care for anything or any one? Good heavens! how can any girl be so indifferent! You deserve to have nobody care for you; you deserve to be kept by yourself, to be allowed to do whatever you please, never to be minded or thought

of. You deserve—to be shaken!" said Nelly, with all the heat of sudden passion.

Innocent turned round and looked at her, vaguely wondering; though she did not comprehend the gentler emotions, she knew what it was to be scolded. It was an experience she had gone through before. Her father and Niccolo had both scolded her, and the sound was familiar. Perhaps it might even have penetrated her apathy, and roused some sort of life in her, had not poor Nelly been smitten by instant compunction, and gone down metaphorically on her knees to expiate her fault.

"Oh, what a wretch I am," cried Nelly, "to lose patience with you like this, you poor, dear, little lonely child. I daresay you will care for us in time. I did not mean to be disagreeable, Innocent. It was only disappointment and vexation, and my horrid temper. Forgive me, won't you?" she said, taking the girl's hand. Innocent let it drop as soon as she could extricate her fingers. She was moved only to wonder, and a feeling scarcely lively enough to be called impatience—weariness of this perpetual emotion. Nelly seemed to her to be always laughing or crying, always demanding sympathy, requiring to be responded to, asking answers which by no strain of her nature could Innocent give.

"Oh, don't!" she said, as her cousin put her arms round her and pleaded for pardon. Poor Nelly, transported with anger and repulsed kindness, had nearly blazed up again, but fortunately restrained herself, looking with a kind of dismay at the other's composure, which, indeed, was a little disturbed by confused amazement, but nothing more.

"You are a very strange girl," she said, drawing away with a feeling of offence which had never before surmounted her friendliness and pity; "but if you will keep us all at arm's length I suppose you must be allowed to do it. If you wish for it very much Mamma, I am sure, will let you have this room."

"I could sleep there," said Innocent, pointing to a hard little settee, which Nelly knew was far from luxurious.

"Oh, you need not be afraid. I shall take care that you are comfortable," said indignant Nelly, and she went away down stairs with dignity to lay the case before her mother. "You know the way back to your own room?" she said, pausing at the door. "As it is Sunday we cannot make the change to-day." Innocent heard, and gazed at her, but made no answer.

She did not know how she had offended her cousin; neither, it is true, did she care; but yet a certain surprise awoke in her mind. Why was Nelly angry? What was there to make any one angry? Innocent did not connect the "scolding" which she was aware of with anything that might have called it forth. Scolding was in her experience a phenomenon by itself, not attached by way of cause and effect to any other phenomena. Many times in her life she had been scolded; but very seldom could she have told why. In this present case the cause was one entirely beyond her moral grasp. If she had broken a china teacup or torn a dress these would have been tangible causes of displeasure, which her mind could have taken in; but this was altogether mysterious. Perhaps it was partially owing to the strange way in which she had been brought up, and the absence of natural love in her early life that Innocent's entire mental constitution was of so peculiar a kind. She had no consciousness of the home affections, no need of them, no perception of their sweetness. Whether there might not be in her the capacity for a great love was yet unproved; but she had no affections. Such a condition of nature is not so rare perhaps as we think. There are both men and women who can love with passion the lover or the mistress, the husband or the wife; but who remain through all the warmth of that one possibility cold as death to all other affections. The decorous guise of ordinary life prevents such natures from making themselves fully visible in many cases. But Innocent was like a savage; she was unaware of the necessity of those gentle pretences and veils of apparent feeling which hold civilized life together. Therefore she sinned openly, and, so to speak, innocently against the softer natural sentiments which are general to humanity, yet did not exist in her own bosom. She knew nothing about them, and she had never been taught to feign a virtue which she did not possess.

She sat in her newly-found refuge till she was thoroughly chilled with cold, and gazing from the window she found out an object which exercised some influence upon her afterwards, and got her into some immediate trouble. This was a little chapel in the distant road, which some freak of her imagination connected with that little church of the Spina which she had been in the habit of frequenting in Pisa in so strange and passive a way. I need not tell the gentle reader that the

Methodist Chapel in the Brighton Road was profoundly unlike any Chapel ever dedicated to Our Lady. This particular Little Bethel, however, was ornamented in front with some stucco pinnacles and tabernacle work, which caught at a stray corner of Innocent's memory. She had been taken to church that very morning, to a church utterly unlike Santa Maria della Spina—a huge place, with pews and galleries full of people, where she had looked on at a service of which she had very little knowledge, and listened to a sermon which she never attempted to understand. A longing for her old haunt came upon her as she saw the place which seemed to recall it to her mind. If she could but get there it seemed to her that part of her old life—with which she had never been dissatisfied—would come back.

Innocent had so far felt the thrill of awakening novelty and change as to know that her present life was not satisfactory, though rather in the instinctive way of sensation than by any conscious thought. The little chapel possessed her not with any idea of improvement or knowledge to be gained, but only as a possible means of drawing back to her a scrap of the past. Innocent had a consciousness that were she to rush out immediately to find this place she would be stopped and "scolded," or perhaps locked in, and prevented for ever from gratifying her wish, so she resisted her impulse to go at once. The dreary afternoon by this time was over, and the dressing bell sounded its welcome summons through the house. Frederick was dining out, so that there was nothing to detain her in the drawing-room during the evening. She stole up to her room as soon as dinner was over, and, taking her old velvet cloak from her trunk, and the old black hat which she had worn in Pisa, stole very carefully downstairs, and out into the darkness. Nobody saw her making her stealthy exit, and it was with a strange sense of bewildered freedom mixed with fear that she found herself out of doors alone, in the drizzling rain and darkness. She had no superstitious terrors, however, of any kind, her imagination being too little active to make them possible, and she had run down the long dark stairs of the Palazzo Scaramucci too often to be afraid merely of the dark. It was the novelty, the uncertainty as to how to turn and where to go that moved her. However, Innocent had the good fortune which so often attends the beginning of a foolish enterprise. By a

maze of muddy turnings, which she took aright by mere luck, and without making any note of them for guidance on her return, she managed to make her way to the chapel. It was resounding with the clangour of a hymn, chanted at the top of their voices by the young men and young women who form in all places and in all churches the majority of the evening worshippers. The noise startled this poor little pilgrim; but she stole in notwithstanding, to the mean little building full of pews and glaring gas lights, which was like and yet unlike Mr. Browning's wonderful description. The sight of the place inside startled Innocent still more. The quaint darkness of her little Italian church, the silent people kneeling and sitting here and there, the priest proceeding with his uncomprehended mystery at the altar, the glimmer of the tapers, the odour of the incense, were strangely replaced by the glare of light, the clangour of the hymn, the people packed close in their pews, who stared at the lonely girl as she entered. The chapel was very full; but Innocent, whose instinct led her to the dark corners, found a refuge in a dim pew close to the door, underneath the little gallery, where after a while a grim old pew-opener with a black bonnet, came and sat beside her. Innocent went through her own little simple formula; she kneeled down and said the Lord's Prayer; and then she seated herself and gazed towards the pulpit, which stood in place of the altar. I do not know whether the sermon that followed would of itself have attracted her attention any more than the more regular and decorous one which she had heard in the morning. But while poor Innocent sat looking rather than listening, and began to think of repeating her prayer and going away again, the old woman at her side uttered a groan which chilled the very blood in her veins. The girl shrank away from her into the corner of the pew as far as she could go, and turned her eyes from the pulpit to her terrible neighbour. But no sooner had she recoiled thus than a man in front of her uttered another exclamation. The preacher was one famous in the Wesleyan connexion, whose appearance prepared his audience for excitement, and as he went on the exclamations grew louder and louder. Innocent, who had no understanding of this proceeding at all, who could not make out even the words of those cries which rose around her, was first startled into fright, and then frozen into physical terror. I

don't know what dreadful vision of savages and cannibals and human sacrifices came into her bewildered mind; a mixture of fairy tales, and those horrors of ghosts and vampires which still linger about Italy, and which she had heard, though at an ordinary moment her memory would not have retained them. The old woman by her side was pale and haggard, with long teeth and large jaws. She groaned at regular intervals, so regular that Innocent got to be prepared for them, though they made her jump each time they sounded on her. When her endurance was almost at an end and she had become sick with very fear, there came a lull in the proceedings; a hymn was sung, and part of the congregation went out. Innocent made an anxious effort to go too, but the old woman stood immovable between her and the door, and the girl watched with agony the last figures retiring, and an evident movement to begin again taking place. "Let me go. Let me go!" she cried in her terror. The old woman clutched her shoulder with long lean fingers, which looked like claws to the girl's excited fancy. She approached her face to Innocent's ear, and hoarsely whispered something which she did not understand. Innocent was half frantic with fear. She did not know what might be the next step. It seemed to her that other people were approaching her, and that she saw the gleam of knives, an idea which was natural enough to her Italian breeding. She uttered one loud shriek, and springing over into the pew in front rushed out of the chapel, pushing down some one in her passage. It seemed to her that she heard steps pursuing as she flew madly along the dimly-lighted road. She had taken the turn towards London in her bewilderment, and by the time she lost breath and was obliged to stop had come to the verge of a greater thoroughfare, crowded and noisy. No one had come after her, though she had thought she heard steps resounding close behind. She stopped short, panting for breath; and, leaning against a wall, looked round her in dismay up at the dark sky, and down at the muddy road, and along the long line of dim lamps and passing figures, all strange, and without help for her. When the full sense of her helplessness, her loneliness, her desolation, burst upon her she crouched down upon the pavement close to the wall, and burst into tears. "Niccolo! Niccolo!" she cried, with a wail of childish despair. Another girl in



such circumstances would have called upon God or her mother; but Innocent knew nothing of her mother, and very little of God. The only being who had always been helpful to her was Niccolo. She called upon him with a bitter cry of helplessness. Niccolo in Pisa—how could he come to her? What could he do for her? But other help—less tender, less sure than Niccolo's—was approaching slowly to her along the crowded way.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## FREDERICK TO THE RESCUE.

"WHAT is wrong?" said one of two young men who were coming along the road.

"Bah! what does it matter to us?" said his companion.

This companion was Frederick Eastwood. He had dined out, and he had looked in for half an hour at his club, and he was now walking leisurely home with a friend who was going the same way. Why should two gentlemen thus making their way homewards on a Sunday evening pay any attention to a group of people gathered on the muddy pavement? But the curiosity of his companion was stronger than Frederick's indifference. There were a dozen or so of people standing round some one who was crouching down against the wall, and there was a policeman in the middle.

"Ask her her name: even if she's fur-rin' she'll give some sort of an answer to that," was suggested by one of the bystanders.

"It is some tipsy woman," said Frederick; but the next moment he changed colour, and stepped into the midst of the crowd.

"Call me a cab," he said to his amazed friend, and put out his hand to grasp, not very gently, at the old cloak which he recognized. "Heaven and earth! what has brought you here?" he said in a tone of passion. The crouching figure uttered a cry, and, springing up at once, rushed upon him and clung to his arm.

"She's found her young man at last," said some one in the crowd; and the very policeman grinned as he cast the light of his lantern upon poor Innocent, who, pale and scared, and dazzled by the light, clung closer and closer to her cousin.

"Oh, Frederick, I lost my way. Take me home! take me home!" she cried piteously.

"Why did you ever leave home, you

little fool?" he asked, and thrust her savagely into the cab which drove up. He threw a coin to the policeman, and waved a good-night to his companion. He did not give any explanation. It was better, he thought, to leave his friend to suppose that this was some adventure—some disreputable acquaintance whom he took the trouble to help, than to let him know who it really was whom he had found in such a position. But he was savage when he got into the cab, and thrust away the girl, who put out her trembling hands, to cling to him once more.

"How can you be such an idiot?" he said. "Where next must I pick you out of? Do you know you are behaving like a shameless creature, and doubly like a fool? Did you come out after me? or why are you here, and where were you going? By heaven, it is enough to drive a man mad to see a girl making an idiot of herself like this!"

Poor Innocent could not stand against this torrent of reproof. She shrank back into a corner, and cried and sobbed. It seemed to her that heaven and earth had risen up against her, now that Frederick "scolded" her too. She had done no harm. But what an evening, what a round of miserable adventures she had gone through! Her limbs were aching with fatigue, and her mind with fright and terror. He had seemed to her the very messenger of heaven for her deliverance. Her cry when she saw him was one of those outcries of pure joy which sound keen and sharp as if a pang were in them. Out of the darkness, the forlornness, the utter misery, he appeared to her like an angel. But when the angel began to scold her, poor Innocent, muddy and wretched, shrank up into her corner. For the first time a consciousness of her own foolishness came across her mind. How could he, so spotless and smooth as he was, touch or look at her, with mud on her dress, with her old cloak wet with the rain, and her hair hanging limp and damp upon her shoulders? Yes, she deserved to be scolded: she perceived this for, perhaps, the first time in her life.

"When you have done crying," said Frederick, still savage, "perhaps you will explain to me what ridiculous cause brought you to this plight. Have you run away entirely? Where were you going? What do you want? You little fool! They are far kinder to you at home than any one would be anywhere else.

You would gain very little, I can tell you, by running away."

"I did not mean to run away," said Innocent, crying softly, as it were, under her breath.

"You will find no other people so foolish," said Frederick, savagely. "What did you want? what were you thinking of? Good heavens! you are a girl, are you, and not a spirit of mischief? Fancy my dismay when I saw you—you, who ought to have been safe and sound at home, questioned by a policeman in the midst of a London crowd! Try and imagine how disgraceful such a thing is to yourself—how exasperating to me."

"Oh, Frederick!" cried the girl, overwhelmed by his reproaches, and roused into understanding by the sharpness of the pain to which she was subjected, "I did not mean it. Do not be angry: it was not my fault—"

"Not your fault!" he cried in his rage. "Good heavens! if it had not been that I was afraid you might get into some still more disgraceful scrape, I should have left you to your fate. The thought did go through my mind. If this were known, nobody would ever speak to you again; nobody would believe your excuses. Not your fault! What made you come out at all, away from home?"

"Oh, don't be angry," she cried, piteously, and put out her trembling hand to touch his coat, to propitiate and pacify him with abject self-humiliation. By this time his passion had begun to wear itself out, but he would not give her any sign of forgiveness. When the cab reached the gate of the Elms, it was thrown open to them by all the servants in a body, who were searching about among the shrubbery with lights.

"Oh, here she is, with Mr. Frederick. I know'd she'd be found with Mr. Frederick," said one of the maids, whom Frederick overheard.

Mrs. Eastwood met them at the door, looking pale and frightened. "Oh, thank God, here she is at last!" she cried to Nelly, who was behind.

Innocent clutched tightly at Frederick's arm, as she stepped down, bewildered and dazzled by the lights that flashed everywhere around her. He had scolded her cruelly, but yet she clung to him in preference to the women who had been so kind to her. He felt the implied compliment, even in the midst of his wrath.

"Yes, I have brought the little fool home," he cried, loudly, that all might

hear him. "Where do you think I found her? In the middle of the Brompton Road, with a crowd round, crying, and unable to tell where she came from. What were you thinking of, mother, to let such a child go out alone?"

"I! let her go out alone!" cried Mrs. Eastwood, astonished at the undeserved blame. "Are you mad, Frederick? I have been more unhappy about her than I can say. The gardener has gone out to look everywhere, and we have been all over the grounds with lanterns. But bring her in—bring her in. Thank God we have her safe at last!"

With the lights apparently flashing all round her, dazzling her eyes, Innocent went in, half-dragged by Frederick, to whom she kept clinging. He pushed her roughly into a chair, pulling away his arm. "There! let us see if you can give any account of your escapade," he said, harshly.

The tones of his voice, his harsh words, sunk into poor Innocent's heart like stones sinking into water. She remembered nothing else afterwards, and the pain seemed something more than she could bear. She sat and gazed at them all, holding her old faded cloak round her closely, and showing the stains of mud on it and upon her black frock. Her hair fell limp to her neck: her poor little hat was pushed back from her head. The excitement and distress threw out, as nothing before had done, the peculiar beauty of her face, but a more forlorn figure could not have been seen. Mrs. Eastwood was more anxious and more compassionate than her son.

"How was it, Innocent?" she asked: "I am sure you could not mean any harm. Tell me where were you going? where had you been?"

The girl sat silent, like one under a spell, eager yet dumb, on the point of utterance. She seemed to struggle with some force which prevented her from speaking. She turned her eyes from one to another, eager, miserable—trying, it seemed, to tell her story—incapable of beginning. At last she surmounted the spell, and burst suddenly into wild tears.

"I did not mean it. I saw the church from the window—I thought it was like the Spina. Oh—h! it was not a church at all: it was some dreadful place. They tried to kill me, and then I fled—fled! and I did not know the way—"

"What is the Spina?" said Mrs. Eastwood, wondering. "You frighten her, Frederick, making those grimaces. In-

nocent, no one will be hard upon you. Tell me plainly; what sort of a dreadful place was it? Why did you go?"

The girl looked round her at them all, one after another. Why did she go? She did not really understand the question, but it seemed to drive her to that necessity for an answer which sometimes brings the truth from our lips, and sometimes calls up an involuntary fiction which appears like truth to other minds, and sometimes to that of the speaker. "I was — lonely," she said, after a long pause.

Mrs. Eastwood gave a cry of pain. She turned her back upon them all, and walked up and down the room two or three times with an agitation that no one understood. Then she came and stood by Innocent, and put one arm round her. "Oh, Nelly," she cried, "Nelly, this is our fault!"

It would be wrong to say that Nelly was less tender-hearted than her mother, except in so far as youth is always less considerate, less tolerant than experience; but on this occasion she stood unmoved, feeling more indignant than sorry. She, too, had made her essay at sympathy, and she had not got the better of its rejection. She stood by without any particular demonstration, while by degrees some sort of account of the evening was got from her cousin. Innocent told them in broken words all that had happened to her. She shuddered as she described the groans. She was sure she had seen the gleam of the knives, and heard the steps approaching of the men who were going to kill her. This curious Italian version of a very common-place incident puzzled the family greatly, to whose imagination knives were quite strange and impossible things. When she had told her tale somehow, she sat, looking at them all, one after the other, with strained eyes, not knowing what they might do to her for the crime she seemed to have committed, without knowing it to be a crime. She did not catch the sense of what they said to each other, though her eyes followed every word, trying to divine it on the lips of the speaker.

"I was lonely," she repeated, with a curious mixture of wistful misery, and the childish cunning of the perception that she had made a successful stroke with these words before.

The result, so far as Innocent was concerned, was that she was taken tenderly upstairs, and committed to the care of Alice, who put her to bed, and questioned

her over again, making her own reflections on the adventure. Innocent cried herself to sleep, sobbing while drowsiness crept over her, and waking up to sob again. The groans of the old woman in the chapel possessed her brain, and the strange black desolation of the streets, which every time she dropped asleep seemed to enfold her again, frightening her back out of the world of dreams to feel for the first time the soothing of the firelight, and the kindly warmth and comfort of her little room. These, however, were but superficial tortures. The one which gave them their hold upon her, and which had indeed produced a sort of half awakening of her spiritual nature, was the terrible disappointment of being "scolded" by Frederick. She knew no more tragical word to use, even in her own mind. He had forsaken her. She dwelt upon the fact with an acute pang, almost like the birth-pang of the soul which had not yet come to life within her. Almost, but not altogether—for the impulses of that high and potent inspiration of pain died off, when they reached the intolerable point, into vague childish moaning over an unexpected unkindness. Her only moral standing-ground in this vague uncertain world had failed her—Frederick had scolded her. The two things sound very different, yet in the feverish and confused musings of this poor undeveloped nature they were the same.

The party in the drawing-room were moved by very different feelings. The young people could not understand their mother. She had been crying, with her head bent down into her hands. To Nelly the incident was disagreeable and annoying, but not tragic; while to Frederick it had become chiefly an occasion of fault-finding. To think that it was somebody's fault was a great relief to his mind.

"Why do you let her stray about as she likes? Why don't you make her stay in the room with you? Why don't you give her something to do? Surely there are people enough in the house to see that a child like that is not wandering about at her own will wherever she pleases," he said.

This view of the subject relieved him from the indefinite uneasiness which had begun to steal into his mind as to his own sharp words to Innocent. He was quite right in using those sharp words. She must be made to see (he thought) that something more was required of her

than to yield to every impulse — that she must learn, being a girl, to respect the limits which society draws around a girl's path from her earliest beginning. She ought to have known them by instinct; but as she did not know them it was necessary she should be taught, and the sooner and more effectually the better. But, besides this, it was good to have somebody at home to blame for her foolishness. If she had been properly watched it could not have happened. Why did not some one keep her in their eye? Why not force her to remain with the others, if force was necessary? Why not? — There was no end to Frederick's whys; everybody was wrong who had anything to do with the management of the girl; while he managed her, nothing of this sort had happened. But it was not in the nature of things that he could go on looking after a girl of sixteen — and the moment she got into the hands of the women, her natural guardians, this was the issue. It was just like women's way — they wanted to do men's work, and they would not take the trouble to do their own.

That Nelly should have accepted this challenge hotly and fiercely was natural enough; but Mrs. Eastwood took no notice. It was only when the discussion grew furious that she roused herself and interfered.

"Children," she said, in her usual words, but with a more serious tone than usual, "don't wrangle. It does not become you, Frederick, to speak against women who have brought you up, and done everything for you; and it is foolish of you, Nelly, to argue, as if it was a thing for argument. If Frederick thinks I am a fool, and you are a fool, seeing us every day as he does, and knowing all about us, what good will arguing do him?"

"I did not mean that, mother," said Frederick, momentarily ashamed of himself.

"You said it then, my dear, which is a very common thing among men," said Mrs. Eastwood, "and curious when you come to think of it. But, as I say, talk will not change any one's opinion. And here is something very much more serious to call for our attention. Something must be done about Innocent. Her mother made me very unhappy when I was young. She was not affectionate either. She was secret; nobody could ever make sure what was going on in her mind. When she ran away and married

Mr. Vane, none of us had the least suspicion of what was going on. I am afraid of Innocent doing something of the same kind."

"Running away and marrying — some one?" asked Frederick. An ineffable smile of secret complacency came over the young man's face. He gave a short little laugh of pleased embarrassment. "I think you may feel yourself safe against any such danger. Running away — or, at least, marrying — requires two —"

Mrs. Eastwood and Nelly looked at each other with secret feminine indignation, thus relieving their minds; but the mother replied with a composure which she was far from feeling.

"There are more ways of going wrong than making a foolish marriage. That is very wrong, Heaven knows; when you consider how much the very character of the family and its standing in the world depends upon the wife whom a young man may marry in a sudden fancy —"

"If you are referring to me, mother," said Frederick catching fire, "you may make yourself perfectly easy. I look upon Innocent as no more than a child. It seems to me a kind of insult to suppose for a moment that I could be capable —"

"Of running away with Innocent?" said his mother, looking him calmly in the face. "Be comforted, Frederick; I never imagined that you were likely so to compromise yourself. The danger I warned you against was of a very different kind. — But we need not return to that. Nobody can say you have been too kind to her to-night."

"I am not sentimental," he cried, getting up from his chair, and glad of an excuse for being angry, and withdrawing from unpleasant discussion. He went off whistling an opera air, to show his perfect indifference, and was heard next moment pitching coals on the fire in the library, and wheeling the chairs about violently, to get himself the most comfortable place. This Sunday night was not so peaceable as a Sunday night ought to be in a respectable English household, which strove to do its duty. Dick came in immediately after Frederick's withdrawal, with muddy boots, and rain on his rough coat, but his cheeks pink with the cold air outside, and the serenity of an easy mind in his good-natured countenance. Dick seldom wrangled, and never allowed any event to disturb him very deeply. His honest matter-of-fact

character was always a comfort whatever went wrong.

"So she has come back?" he said; "that's a blessing. I went as far as Piccadilly without seeing anything of her. I say, weren't they making a row in that little chapel in the Road—groaning as if they'd groan their heads off. Had Innocent gone after Frederick, as the maids say? or where had she been?"

Dick was much amused when they told him the facts of the case, and saw great possibilities of laughter in the idea.

"I say, what jolly fun," he cried—"thought they were going to kill her? Oh, ho, ho! What a stupid I was not to go in. Poor little soul though, I hope you didn't scold her—not more than you could help, Mamma! I suppose it's right to scold—to a certain point—but she's so scared and so bewildered."

"And you are my own good Dick," cried his mother, giving him a kiss, which the boy did not understand.

"Well, I'm glad to hear it," he said, with a brightening of pleasure, "though hang me if I know why. Ain't I muddy, rather! You never saw such a night. Honest fog is a joke to it. Drizzle, drizzle for ever; and the sky is so low you could touch it. I'm glad she's in all right, and safe in bed; and I hope you didn't whip her. If I'm to be up at seven to those dear mathematics," Dick added, making a face, "I suppose I had better go to bed, too—"

"And don't forget to get up when you are called, dear," said Mrs. Eastwood; "and do work, there's a good boy. I am sure you have plenty of brains, if you will only take the trouble."

Dick shrugged his shoulders, as he went off cheerful after his long walk. I don't know that his brains were at all superabundant; and he was not fond of work; but after the clever and refined Frederick, the very sight of this honest fellow, weighted to the ground as he was by the burden of the coming Exam., was a consolation to everybody belonging to him. The mother and daughter had a final consultation before they, too, left the drawing-room. There had to be beer ordered for the gardener, who came in much more overwhelmed by the fatigue of his bootless walk than Dick was, depressed about things in general, and taking a dark view of Innocent's prospects in particular.

"Gentlemen don't like to be followed about like that," he said, oracularly, "no more nor I would myself. Women should

know as their place is at 'ome, and make up their minds to it."

This, it is true, was said downstairs to a sympathetic housemaid; but, being an old servant, the gardener felt that he might unfold his mind a little, even to his mistress.

"I'd give the young lady a word, mum," he said, strong in his own sense of injury, as having lost his Sunday evening's ease and leisure through her means. "I'd let her know, whatever may be furrin' ways, as this sort o' thing won't do—not in England. It ain't the thing for a young gell. In furrin' parts there's many ways as ain't like ours—so I'm told—dancing all over the place of Sundays, and that sort; but not to be hard upon her the first time, nor nothing violent, I'd jest give her a word—that it won't do, not here."

"You may be sure I will say all that is necessary," said Mrs. Eastwood, half laughing, half angry. "My niece went out to go to church, and went to the little chapel in the Road, and got frightened, poor child. That is the whole matter."

"Ah, ma'am, you're a simple 'earted one," said the man, shaking his head with a scepticism that no asseveration could have touched.

The maids, too, were of opinion that Mrs. Eastwood was a very simple 'earted one; though not where they themselves were concerned. She had not the same faith in their excuses as she seemed to put in this patent deception attempted by "the French girl," who was a likely one to get into trouble by going to church surely. The kitchen and all its dependencies laughed the idea to scorn, though, perhaps, respecting Innocent more for the cleverness and invention she had displayed in finding out such an excuse. But the story was laid up against her, with a fulness of detail and circumstance such as might have made a historian despair. How she followed Frederick to his dinner-party, and watched him through the window, and went after him to the club, was all known to the housemaid, as particularly as if she had been there.

"And I hope he'll reward her, when he's free and can please hisself," said Jane in the kitchen, who was romantic.

"Get along with you," cried the cook. "Do you think gentlemen care for a chit like that?"

"And one as follows 'em about," said Susan solemnly, whose younger sister Jane was.



From The Cornhill Magazine.  
THE SONS OF HAM.

I HAD been working for several years in one of the worst localities of the east of London, when circumstances occurred which led me to seek for occupation elsewhere. I had not found what I sought, when one night, before turning into my room, I looked into another apartment to say "good-night" to its occupant, a youth of noble ambitions, who was associated with me, whom I found lying on the floor rolled up in a blanket.

"What on earth are you doing there? Get up, you silly fellow," said I, touching him with my toe.

"Not so silly either," said he, "for if I am to go to Central Africa, I think it no bad move to get used to the sort of sleeping accommodation I am likely to get there."

"That may be," was my response, "but get into bed now, or I will thrash you; and to-morrow we will talk about Timbuctoo."

The upshot of this incident was, he stayed in England, and several months afterwards I found myself in the neighbourhood of the Lake Nyassa.

Now, I am not going to tell a story of perilous adventures with wild animals, or daring deeds with savage men, for I love sport so little that I would not go ten yards to shoot the finest beast that ever trod the earth, and though I have courage enough to do my duty, to the feeling which seeks danger for itself I am a perfect stranger. But I have some observations to make by the light of my experience in Africa upon certain prejudices which find place amongst ourselves with reference to the sons of Ham, which, though they do not absolutely chase them from the current of our blood, do practically divorce them from our sympathies as beings whose nature is in harmony with our own. Much of the antipathy which we white people have to the Africans is, without doubt, simply owing to the difference which exists between us and them in colour of skin and form of feature. I had a strong repugnance to them myself on this account, and did not really lose it until I was brought face to face with them in their own land. This feeling is somewhat excusable; for it is rarely out of Africa that we meet with Africans who are calculated to win our admiration or regard. In England we usually meet with certain miserable specimens of the West Coast negro races, or some spoiled and petted creature, for

whom perhaps our money is solicited, that he may be kept in a state of idleness; and who excites our contempt by an aping of gentility, which sits upon him with an ill grace, or disgusts us with an assumption of superior piety, in which we cannot believe. In America and the West Indies we find only slaves, or the descendants of slaves, who are more or less weighed down and degraded by the burden of their past or present servitude, and in whom, therefore, we find but little that is calculated to remove the barrier which exists to our unreserved acceptance of the African as "a man and a brother." From these and such as these, who are almost invariably connected with the negro races of western Africa, who are certainly not the most favoured of the sons of Ham, we have formed our opinions, and have had our feelings excited upon the Africans in general. But though the negro is an African, all Africans are not negroes. There are the same varieties to be observed in the descendants of Ham as in those of Shem and Japheth. All are distinctly African; but the retreating forehead, prominent jaws, and ill-formed body with which the negro is generally credited, are not common. It is not only the Manyema, of whom we have lately heard from Dr. Livingstone, who are beautiful in form and feature, for I have met with their counterparts in regions less unknown. In South Africa there is a remarkable illustration of the physical and mental differences which may exist in tribes that are almost contiguous. The Bosjesmen are dwarfed in body and stunted in mind. Their language in its utterance seems to be not far removed from the unintelligent gibbering of the ape. Their habits are those of wild beasts rather than of human beings. They occupy about the lowest position in the scale of humanity. Yet we shall look in vain for finer specimens of the genus homo than the Zulu Kafirs. They are tall in stature, manly in bearing, and graceful in movement. Their language is pleasant to the ear, and capable of expressing almost any thought the human mind is capable of conceiving. They are logical in reasoning, patient in argument, and acute in observation. They are warlike, for they are pastoral in their pursuits; and since the days of the Hyksos, the old shepherd kings who were the terror of Egypt, the lovers of flocks and herds have been fond of fighting. When their blood is up their anger rages unchecked by tender regard or the claims

of pity; but they do not brood over their wrongs, and they readily forget and forgive. "They fought us like men, and during a truce they behaved themselves like gentlemen," was said of them by a friend of mine who had been engaged in war against them. In times of peace they are courteous to strangers, liberal in hospitality, and to the trust reposed in them they respond with an Arab-like fidelity. When once the host has kissed the hand of his guest, there needs neither guards nor weapons, for his life and property are perfectly secure. It is quite true that they in common with all Africans are black, or nearly so; yet you cannot be with them or with other of the higher races of Africa long, without feeling that the affinity between them and the fair-skinned man is perfect in every material point; and the sympathies of a common nature soon bridge over the chasm which at first seems to exist between ourselves and them on account of the difference of colour. Indeed I soon nearly forgot that they were black; and when I recollected it, it was sometimes to their advantage, for in Africa black is a far better colour to wear than white, inasmuch as a white man's complexion, after he has had two or three touches of fever, is apt to turn into a dirty-looking yellow; and then, as my glass assured me more than once, he is not a pleasant object to look at. As a matter of taste, I should not like to see the skin of my own countryfolk darkened, but as a matter of fact I now find it impossible to regard the Africans with any feeling of repugnance because of the sable hue of their epidermis; and I have never met with anyone who has had personal knowledge of them in their own native wilds who could.

But with many the root of this antipathy to the sons of Ham is more than skin deep. It is thought by some that through the operations of an ancestral curse they are branded with an indelible degradation, whereby the instinct of servitude has become an inalienable part of their nature; and by others that, owing to a different origin, they are naturally inferior, and incapable therefore of rising to the high standards of life to which Europeans and some Asiatics have reached.

To justify the position of those who yet believe in the degrading influence of the curse of Noah upon the Africans—and their name is legion—it is necessary to prove that they are the descendants of Canaan, at whom alone the curse was launched, and that slavery has been spe-

cially associated with them. But there is abundant evidence, sacred and profane, to show that, of all the sons of Ham, Canaan was the only one who never entered Africa. His descendants occupied without exception Asiatic localities. We are told in Genesis x. 19, "The border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou goest unto Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, even unto Lasha." Whereby Palestine is unmistakably indicated. And Josephus also says, "Canaan, the fourth son of Ham, inhabited the country now called Judea, and called it from his own name, Canaan." From which it is evident that the Africans are not the descendants of Canaan, and that there is no foundation therefore for the assertion that they are of some mysterious spiritual necessity doomed to be the "servant of servants," inasmuch as Noah's malediction, which is gravely supposed to entail this degradation, cannot be shown to apply to them. That it was ever thought to do so is but another proof of the power of self-interest and prejudice to stultify the mind and pervert the conscience. Slavery, however, has existed in Africa during every stage of its history, but there are no people with whom slavery has not at some period been a national institution, and there are few if any races of men who have been exempted from it. Slavery, as it exists with the Africans themselves, varies with the character and pursuits of the various tribes. In its different features it finds resemblance, probably, to every system of slavery that has obtained amongst men, save that which took its rise in the sixteenth century, when the Spaniards turned towards Africa for labourers to fill up the places they had made vacant by their exterminating treatment of the natives of the West Indies. That system stands alone as the outcome of the Christian civilization of modern times. Amongst the Zulus, and other warlike tribes, the slaves are for the most part composed of those who are the captives of the sword and the spear. Their position for some time is a hard one doubtless, for there is at first but little sympathy between the conquerors and the conquered. The latter are treated with Spartan-like rigor. Life is but lightly regarded by the Zulus and such like folk; and their anger frequently finds expression in the death of the slave who may have provoked it. Dr. Livingstone brought from the interior in 1860 a number of men from the Makololo country of whom however, only two were really

Makololo. The others belonged either to the Batoka or the Bashubia, tribes that had been subjugated by the Makololo. I knew these men well, and had frequent opportunities of observing the bearing of the Makololo towards the rest. They never seemed to forget, or to let the others forget that they belonged to the dominant race. Livingstone regarded and treated them all as free men, and kept in check the despotic tendencies of the dominating two; but I have heard them, when angered by any of the others, say, "Yes, you escape now, but if we were at Linyanti (the capital of the Makololo) I would kill you." And I have no doubt that in their own country they had over such people the power of life and death. When these men were left by Livingstone, he armed them all equally. For a time the Makololo succeeded in maintaining some kind of authority over the rest, but eventually the Batoka and the Bashubia, who knew how to use their guns, freed themselves from all control, and each set up as a chief for himself, and established over the gentler-natured natives with whom they gained power, the same harsh tyranny under which they themselves had groaned. The presence of myself and friends in their neighbourhood operated as a considerable restraint upon their actions, nevertheless they exercised such severity upon those who were brought under their control, that it was not difficult to imagine what their conduct would have been had we not been near at hand to modify it. As an illustration of their discipline, a young man came to us one day who was in the employ of perhaps the most truculent of the Bashubia, with a considerable portion of his skull laid literally bare—the effect of a punishment which he had just received from his employer for some act of disobedience. Yet these men were not by any means savages—upon the whole they were very good fellows—they simply acted according to the custom of their people, and no worse than most barbarians. I doubt indeed, if their conduct towards their dependents was so bad as that of the ancient Greeks and Romans towards their slaves, of whom the greater part were certainly not Africans; or of the Anglo-Saxons towards their thralls; or, until just lately, of the Russians towards their serfs. It is violent, but not morally degrading. There is no denial of brotherhood with the subjugated, who sooner or later are invariably incorporated with their conquerors, and made partakers of all their rights and privileges:

that is, where the slave trade as inaugurated by ourselves is not in force; for where that has penetrated the conquered are frequently exchanged for guns and other articles of European manufacture, which are now known throughout a greater part of Africa, and eagerly sought for by the natives.

The Manganja and some other tribes with whom I was more immediately concerned, were given to agriculture, were of gentle dispositions, not warlike, averse to deeds of violence, and held life almost as sacred as we do. With these tribes, the position of the slave was that of the child born in the house, rather than of an enemy brought to it by force. Indeed, with them slavery assumed a patriarchal form; there was no such distinction as master and slave: the word slave had no proper equivalent in their language; the bond were called children, and those to whom they were in bondage fathers. The slaves amongst these people were obtained by inheritance, purchase, or by the operation of certain customs whereby liberty was forfeited; and the Manganja were most ingenious in devising means for the accomplishment of this end. It was with them as with the Siamese, a regular code of slave laws existed. In Siam, until within the last five or six years, there were those who had become slaves by war, purchase, inheritance, and debt; and, under certain conditions, a man might sell his wife, his children, and even himself. And this was literally true of the Manganja. Yet the difference of condition between the bond and the free was not painfully marked. All lived alike, all followed the same occupations. A stranger passing through the land would not know, from anything he saw to remind him of it, that slavery existed. But, inasmuch as the "fathers" were responsible for their "children," the latter were not allowed to roam, save by permission, beyond the boundaries of their owners' possessions, but within these limits they had as much liberty of action as the free. An incident was brought under my notice, which placed the necessity for this restriction clearly before me. One morning a man was discovered imprisoned in a hut in our village with his arms and legs tightly bound with bow strings. This led me to suppose that he was placed there in reserve for the slave dealers, who were known to be in the neighbourhood, and in violation of the covenant, under which the people of this district had placed themselves, to have

no further dealings with slave traders. But the chief of the village said it was not so; that the man had been arrested by his orders; that he was a "child" of a friend of his, a vagabond who would not stay with his wife and children, but went prowling about the country after other men's wives, and that his name, Tabara — the adulterer — indicated the crime of which he was frequently guilty, and for which his "father" had to pay. This statement was confirmed by the arrival of the "father," who said he did not wish to sell his vagabond "child," or to hurt him in any way, it not being the custom of the Manganja to be cruel to their children. All he desired was that Tabara should conduct himself like other men, stay at home with his own wife, cultivate his garden, and not get into trouble himself, or bring trouble upon others. The great men among the Manganja multiplied "children," not that they might profit by their labour, but that by increasing the number of their retinue, they might add to their dignity and importance when, as was of frequent occurrence, they paid a visit to some brother chief. During seasons of pleasure the Manganja chiefs showed none of the proud reserve of the Makololo, who held themselves aloof from the amusements of their inferiors, for with ready sympathies they responded to the summons to dance, and bond and free danced together, the one without any sense of degradation, the other without being reminded of their inferiority. But though this form of slavery seems to be comparatively innocent in its immediate results, it is an evil, inasmuch as the chiefs can dispose at will of any who are in any way in bondage to them; and it is therefore, to a considerable extent, the feeder of the abominable slave trade. Such fellows as Tabara frequently find their way into the slave-dealer's hands, in order that his owner may be reimbursed by his sale, for the expense to which he may have been put by his depredations; and cupidity, petty spite, jealousy, and fear, all help to swell the number of the trader's victims. Nevertheless, I think it will be seen from these two examples which represent the extreme positions assumed by it in Africa, that slavery amongst the Africans themselves differs in nothing from that which has existed with other races, in all ages, and in every part of the world.

Yet, inasmuch as the Africans have during the last four hundred years monopolized the miseries of slavery in

America, and some other lands, it is supposed that they of all people are peculiarly fitted for slavery. This is a mistake. It is true that the demand for labour in the West Indies was met by the forcible substitution of the negro for the Indian, and that the negro and some other tribes have been reduced to a perpetual servitude, and kept in bondage without great difficulty. But those who have been enslaved form but a small section of the African people. There are many tribes who have never submitted to slavery; who have resisted every effort that has been made to enslave them; and who, in their love of freedom, seem not unlike the North American Indian. A section of the Zulu family, for instance, occupies South-eastern Africa, from the northern frontiers of Natal to the south bank of the Zambesi. They are the terror of the Portuguese, and make them pay tribute for all their establishments on the southern bank of the river. Before this exaction was complied with, the Portuguese endeavoured to overcome their foes in warfare, and failed. In the various conflicts that took place many of these natives were taken prisoners, and efforts were made to reduce them to the condition of slaves; but in no single instance did such efforts succeed. A professional slave-breaker once told me that he had done his utmost to break their spirit, for he was ambitious of the reputation of having accomplished what others had failed to do, but he spent his strength in vain. They were petted, they were tortured, they were starved, and they died under this discipline, cursing and defying their enemies to the last. And what is thus true of this people, is true also of the Massai, the Gallas, and other powerful tribes who hold the country between the Zanzibar territory and the Red Sea. The instinct of servitude is as foreign to their natures as to our own. It is no wonder that men aided by superior knowledge, and by more deadly weapons of war, were able to enslave some of the Africans; and having done so, it is not surprising that they should seek to palliate their injustice by depreciating them, by speaking of them as though they were in nature essentially inferior, and incapable of living in self-governing communities: or that the condition of Hayti is pointed to as an illustration of the truth of this last assertion. I do not, however, think that Hayti affords a fair criterion of what the Africans are capable in the way of self-government. For what are the facts of

the case with reference to this island? Under the guidance of a few men, who were far ahead of all the rest in intelligence, the negroes, after a desperate and sanguinary struggle, during which both whites and blacks fought like wild beasts, and were guilty of almost unimaginable barbarities, achieved their independence. Slaves in nature still, yet with wildest ideas of liberty, semi-barbarous, hating, and being hated, ignorant, and yet suspicious of the power which knowledge gives, it is scarcely to be wondered at that they have excited the pity of their friends and the contempt of their enemies. Nevertheless, I doubt if the present position of Hayti is so bad as that of some of the South American Republics.

But against Hayti we may fairly claim to place Liberia. Most of the citizens of that republic are the descendants of men who were slaves in the United States. Under the fostering care of the American Colonization Society, they were established at Liberia, where they acquired territory by purchase from the aboriginal owners. In 1847, this little community of freed men formed themselves into an independent republic. Since then their numbers have considerably increased by emigration from America, and by accessions from native tribes. From time to time, as circumstances required, the boundaries of their territory have been enlarged, not by conquest, but by honourable purchase from the owners of the soil. Towns and villages, schools and churches, hospitals and public buildings have been erected, without ostentation, yet with wise forethought. The affairs of the republic are prudently and modestly administered, laws are enacted and obeyed, taxes are granted and paid. National life is showing itself to be a reality, and not a sham; not in showy demonstrations, but in manly efforts to develop the resources of the country, in commerce, education, law, and religion. Palm oil, cam wood, ivory, sugar, molasses, coffee, and some other things are now exported, to the value of at least 500,000 dollars a year, while the imports amount to about three-fourths of that sum. To the ability of the President of Liberia, Mr. Reverdy Johnson, when in England, bore witness. Speaking at a meeting of working men in London upon the folly of supposing that any class or race of men were branded with an ineradicable mental inferiority, he stated that he had just seen a despatch that was written by the President of Liberia, a pure-blooded African,

which in ability would not suffer by comparison with the despatches of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli. The progress of Liberia had been really good; it is fast winning the confidence of those who prophesied its failure; and its prospects are probably great. Indeed, to its most enthusiastic friends, it seems not unlikely that it may justify the opinion of the *Westminster Review*, which spoke of its foundation as "a greater event probably, in its consequences, than any that has yet occurred since Columbus set sail for the New World." I cannot but think, however, that the truest test of the capacity of the Africans for governing themselves is best afforded by the various forms of government which exist in Africa itself. There is abundant evidence to prove that the original government was patriarchal; but the ambition of some, and the weakness of others, have in the course of time produced as many revolutions there as elsewhere; and now you may find almost every form of government, from a despotism where law is the unrestrained expression of the chief's will, to a state of things where prompt action becomes almost impossible, through the power of unlimited debate which is accorded to all upon any question affecting the social and political welfare of the tribe.

The Zulus who live north of Natal are paramount amongst the tribes of South Africa, and they gained this pre-eminence through the commanding energy and ability of one man, Chaka, who, had he been a European, would surely have been called "the Great"; but being only an African barbarian, is simply surnamed "the Bloody." Previous to his reign his people were least amongst their brethren. They occupied a tract of land of not more than ten or twelve square miles in extent. Chaka was a son of the chief of this little community. From some peculiar circumstances attending upon his birth he was regarded by the people as the possessor of super-human gifts. Probably his mother in her ambition for her child suborned the medicine men to fabricate a lying wonder on his behalf. But as he grew in years he did not disappoint the expectations that were thus formed of him. He was tall in stature, great in strength, and in all deeds of daring and energy he outstripped those of his own age. The reputation which these qualities obtained for him, excited the jealousy of his father, and Chaka, to save his life, fled to the Amatetwe, a neighbouring tribe, whose chief gave him



protection. With these people he remained until he was thirty years of age, when his father died, and by which time he was distinguished above all men as the possessor of gifts that are in high esteem with the Zulus. By the aid of some of the Amatetwe he made himself chief of his own people; and the first act that signalized his reign was the putting to death of all whom he suspected of being hostile to himself. This was sanguinary, but from his point of view no worse, and fully as necessary as the *coup d'état* by which more civilized potentates have obtained the supreme power. His next exploit was to make war upon and to subdue the tribe that had protected him when he was an exile. This was ungrateful, but men of great ambition nearer home have contemplated ingratitude as great. Then he abolished the old laws, and enacted the Code Chaka, by which as chief he was invested with absolute personal authority, and, as in more enlightened lands, the entire nation was made subservient to the production and maintenance of an army. Then he introduced a new system of warfare. He marshalled his troops into regiments, which were formed into three divisions, a portion of each being incorporated with every force that took the field. Instead of the ordinary bush fighting he made his men fight at close quarters; and for the slender javelin which was thrown from a distance, he substituted a single stabbing spear of stouter materials, the loss of which was punished with death. For defensive purposes he gave to each man a large shield made out of buffalo hide. His discipline was severe. His soldiers had no alternative but to conquer or to die, for retreat, even when compelled thereto by superior numbers, was visited by him with death. But such a punishment was rarely necessary; for Chaka was a consummate general, and had the art of inspiring his followers with his own irresistible spirit. He made war upon all around him, and tribe after tribe was conquered, until he had been proclaimed victorious from the Mapoota to the Umzimvubu. Having thus satisfied his warlike ambition, he directed his energies to the consolidation of his empire. And in the doing of this he seems to have earned his terrible surnamé as much by the merciless exercise of his despotic power upon those who had become "his people," as by his warfare upon enemies. As he grew old his natural force abated, his servants conspired against him, and

he was murdered on the 23rd of September, 1828. Many rejoiced at his death; but the Zulus cherish the memory of his greatness, swear by the terror of his name, and have made his war song their national anthem. And judging him by the standard of his possibilities he was worthy of this honour. Out of a number of petty and conflicting kingdoms he made an empire which did not disappear at his death. Out of an undisciplined rabble he organized an army of a hundred thousand men, which has been found to be irresistible by every native force against which it has been hurled. And the influence of his life has extended far beyond the boundaries of his own dominions. For the name of Mosilikatsi is almost as much known in Africa as that of Chaka. He was one of Chaka's generals; but being entrusted with the command of an important military post on the frontier of the Zulu territory, he betrayed his trust, and marched off with his soldiers towards the north west, where, putting into force the art of war which he had learnt from his master, he subjugated and destroyed, until he became the lord paramount of an extensive kingdom, and the exponent of an irresponsible power. Manikoos also was another of Chaka's men. He was sent with a large force to drive the Portuguese out of their possessions around Delagoa Bay; but failing to do that, inasmuch as they retired to their forts on the coast, from which having no guns, he could not dislodge them, instead of returning to be slaughtered by his chief for having failed, he made himself master of the men under his command, and speedily subdued the tribes from Delagoa Bay to the river Zambesi. His successors have in all things shown themselves to be apt disciples of Chaka. And yet it must not be supposed that the unrestrained authority which these men possess, is as a rule exercised capriciously, and in a manner injurious to the interests of the tribe, or indeed of individuals. It is not so. Much wisdom as well as much power is frequently shown by these despots in the administration of their own law. An instance of the method in which Sebituane governed the Makololo will serve to show this.

For some time the Makololo had suffered from a great social grievance. The men who had obtained power and wealth under Sebituane while he was gaining for himself a kingdom, contrived by their position and riches to procure for themselves the most desirable women of the tribe, and they so multiplied their wives,

that for the rest of the men but few women were left, and they for the most part were old, ill-favoured, and the forsaken. Therefore scandals, feuds, and bloodshed were of frequent occurrence. When one morning before sunrise, Sebituane, who had kept his own counsel, caused it to be proclaimed throughout the tribe that those men and women who had companioned together since the previous sunset, should for the future be partners for life, without regard to previous alliances. The effect of this proclamation was remarkable; there were but few men who had not wives, and fewer still who retained more than one. And as this edict was followed by another, which made death the punishment of adultery, the moral tone of the tribe was raised. Sebituane was not one of Chaka's men, but he adopted his system of war and of government, which are, I think, likely to prevail, until the aspects of life amongst the natives, who are independent of our rule, throughout the whole of Africa south of the Equator are changed. I think, therefore, that the power to govern is by this shown not wanting on the part of the Africans in their own land. The proceedings of Chaka and his imitators may not command our sympathies, strongest language has been used to stigmatize them, and yet in principle and mode of action they have acted like all great men, from Alexander downwards, who have changed the course of the world's affairs. The old forms of government which they destroyed had become effete. I saw, one such pass away with the tribe that possessed it. The Manganja, with whom I lived for some time, were a lively, quick-witted, law-loving, but feeble-natured people, and their government seemed to be framed to enable all under authority to avoid the burden of responsibility. Given wholly to agriculture, they did not live together like the pastoral tribes, in large communities, but were scattered over the country in small villages. Each village had its *mfumo*, or head man; over defined districts, containing many villages, was a chief, whose position was not unlike that of a lord-lieutenant of an English county, and over all was the Rundo, or supreme chief; but over him was an imaginary creature, a spirit, that was supposed to reside on the top of a mountain, and whose will the Rundo consulted when any of the subordinate chiefs came to him in a difficulty. And they frequently came to him. For if trouble occurred in a village, for which unlimited talk-

ing was no cure, the head man, instead of exercising the authority with which he was invested, for fear of incurring enmity, would, as was his privilege, endeavour to shift the responsibility on to the chief of the district; he, if interests were involved which might expose him to ill-will, decide which way he might, would negotiate with other chiefs, in order, if possible, that things might be made pleasant for all parties; but, failing in that, the Rundo was resorted to. His invariable policy was to shelve the question if he could. But, supposing after long debate (and these people debated with an eloquence that would have struck dumb many a tall talker amongst ourselves) this was found impracticable, then Bona, the spirit, was consulted, whose decision, which was given through the medium of a woman to whom he was supposed to appear in her dreams, and his pronouncement disposed of the question, though it was rarely the full force of the judgment was carried out. Government under such circumstances existed scarcely more than in name. It said much, however, for the general docility of these people, that they went on for generation after generation, growing their crops, elaborating their laws, which they rarely enforced, amplifying their customs until their ceremonials were most intricate, with no sedition or revolution amongst themselves, until a people more resolute than they came down upon them and occupied their places. The only man I met with belonging to this tribe who raised himself above the prevalent weakness was Chibisa. For a time he showed a capacity that was almost heroic. He raised himself to chieftainship over a horde of vagabonds from all the tribes between the Zambesi and the Shire; but he lacked the power to continue great: he settled down to eat and to drink (and he had learnt to get drunk from the Portuguese), and at length was shot by a Portuguese rebel, whose alliance he had courted, during a quarrel over a tusk of ivory.

It is almost impossible to know what the Africans really are, unless you live with them long enough to overcome the distrust which most of them have, and with reason, of all men that are not black. The attitude of travellers is generally more or less aggressive, and that of the natives to them actively or passively antagonistic. To strangers they are invariably reticent about their own affairs, and frequently assume an appearance of stupidity, which is not really natural to them.

Frequently, also, travellers grievously misjudge them, by assigning to what they are pleased to call an incurable natural depravity that which is simply the result of some terrible belief, that at one period or another has been the creed of all races. The Africans are very superstitious. They are great believers in witchcraft, which means with them that certain men and women have personal intercourse with unseen spirits, who are generally supposed to be malevolent, and gain from them the power of inflicting mysterious sicknesses and other forms of evil upon man and beast. But this belief is common to the heathen in all parts of the world; and as a vestige of the old heathenism which existed in this land, it is not uncommon to meet with it amongst ourselves. Only the other day a farmer in Dorsetshire was fined by the magistrates for beating an old woman nearly to death, and he did so because he thought her a witch, who had wrought harm to his cattle. Of course this belief with the Africans frequently leads to the perpetration of horrible cruelties. Somewhat akin to belief in witchcraft is faith in fetich. This is elaborated into many customs, but in principle it simply means the power which certain people are supposed to possess, of imparting to an insignificant thing, such as a stick, or a stone, or a bone, for instance, a supernatural efficacy. This superstition also is perpetuated amongst ourselves in the belief in charms. I know a parish in England where it assumes a revolting form. On a certain day in the year, which is known in the district as "toad-bag day," many people resort to a man to purchase a charm against certain kinds of disease, the said charm consisting of a leg of a toad sewed up in a bag, which is thought to have derived some mysterious virtue from the hands of him who sells it, for half-a-crown. Dahomey's bath of blood, and other monstrous practices, which travellers have described, to our loathing, are the outcome of these superstitions, and have been called into existence by the brutal caprice or diseased brain of some more than ordinarily inhuman creature, in whom has been invested supreme power. In a grosser form than the ancient heathen, maybe, the Africans are worshippers of certain powers of nature, and assign to them attributes which minister to sensuality. The reproductive powers, for instance, are held in high esteem, and honoured with many obser-

vances, than which nothing can be more vitiating. Yet the principle which underlies all such customs is the same as that which led the Greeks to regard as the most sacred persons those who in the City of Corinth were consecrated to the worship of Venus. But while we have admitted the Hindus and other Asiatics into the fellowship of the old classic idolaters of Europe, we have excluded the Africans, and misrepresented them because we have not understood their position, and the causes which have led to it.

What the Africans now are, the people that once inhabited these islands were. There is no superstition there that had not its counterpart here, no deed of foulness and barbarity committed there, that was not perpetrated here. We now enjoy all the benefits which have accrued to us through long ages of civilization, through having been brought into harmony with the highest forms of the world's progress; whereas they have been, until lately, isolated from the rest of the world by physical causes, quite as surely as the ocean separated the Sandwich Islanders from our knowledge; and of no people, is it recorded that unassisted they have been able to raise themselves from barbarism. It was the Slave Trade that broke the spell of Africa's seclusion, and in this fact lies the explanation of its continued degradation. but looking at the tone of public feeling amongst all civilized nations with reference to slavery and the slave trade, and the interest now excited amongst all classes by the geographical discoveries of Livingstone and others, the future is full of hope for Africa. Africa is a great fact, we cannot get rid of it, and we are fast becoming convinced that it may be turned to a better use than we have hitherto made of it. The Africans are irrepressible, they have the gift of vitality above most men, and live and multiply under circumstances that would be death to other races. The natives of Tasmania have disappeared; the Australians are nearly extinct; it is but an actuary's question as to when we shall see the last of the New Zealanders; and the Indians of America die out in the presence of the white man. Not so the Africans. Place him where you will, so long as he gets sunshine, and under what circumstances you may, and Israel in Egypt scarcely increased faster. It is estimated that there are nearly fifteen millions of people of African descent on the mainland

and islands of America. Africa itself is more thickly peopled than was supposed, instead of thirty, it probably contains a hundred millions of people. We cannot hope to possess ourselves of Africa as we have of America, for side by side with us on his own soil the African would surely prove the stronger. So whether we meet with him in his own land, or elsewhere, it is manifestly to our own interests (to say nothing of higher motives) to make the best of him. It is in Africa itself we must look for the highest possibilities of the race, for those outside are slaves or the descendants of slaves. They live also in the lands of their thralldom, and in the presence of those who are, or who have been their masters. You may free them all, but you will not purge them from the ill effects of slavery simply by emancipating them. It will take many years to get rid of the mischief which long generations of slavery have wrought in their natures. Had the Israelites after their emancipation remained in Egypt in the presence of their former masters, they would have been slaves in nature still. And so it was with the free coloured men in the United States and the West Indies. Their associations tend to keep alive the recollections of the past and to check noblest aspirations. The galling discomfort, if not of legal prescription, yet of bitter caste-prejudice in the whites, and which manifests itself in every day life in a thousand cruel and annoying ways, are greatly against them. These people therefore, afford as yet no fair criterion of what the African race is capable. I believe, however, that the possibilities of the Africans on their own soil are not inferior to those of any race of men on the earth. Their civilization may, in some things, prove unlike our own, their range of virtue and vice somewhat different, yet I do not think they will prove mentally our inferiors, or that their moral standard will be lower. I say this from no theory evolved from my own inner consciousness, but from a conviction which is the result of a personal knowledge of them. I have helped to deprive the slave trader of his prey; and I have seen those whom we released gradually rise higher and higher under the benign influences that are brought to bear upon them. One of them, Chuma, is now with Dr. Livingstone, and has been his faithful friend and trusted companion in all his weary wanderings and trying experiences. This young man, when a boy,

slept in my hut and was under my own care for nearly three years, and a better youth I have never known. I have seen a great owner of slaves in Africa turn out, as a present to a friend of mine, a boy whom he had not long had from his native village, from the slaves' sleeping pen, as he would a pup from a litter in a dog-kennel, and I have had that boy under my care in England, where he won the hearts of all he met by his ready sympathy with that which was good and true. I have stayed at the Kaffir College at Capetown, where youths but lately gleaned from their native kraals were being educated, and manifesting an ability and a tone of life far superior to that of the lower classes of England, and scarcely inferior to our own youths of a higher station. And while I write, I recollect that there is an African who when a child was taken out of the hold of a slave ship by our English sailors, and who now holds the high position of a Bishop of the English Church, the chief pastor of an African diocese, where all the clergy are Africans. The Africans must from their character and position in the world have an important part to play in the future, and it mainly depends upon us whether that part will be played for good or for evil. In many things they are as necessary to us as we to them, for in many things they are our complement. And indeed this is true of all the differing races of men. The members of a single family generally differ in character, yet the variety of disposition and capacity instead of producing discord, contributes to the higher life and happiness of the home; and so with the various families of men, the Africans not excepted, they are members one of another, and, rightly estimated, are indispensable to the formation of one perfect humanity.

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From The St. James Magazine.

#### THE TWO BROTHERS.

A TALE BY MM. ERCKMANN-CHATRIAN, AUTHORS OF "THE CONSCRIPT," ETC.

#### CHAPTER X.

LOUISE returned from Molsheim in the beginning of September. She had also completed her studies, and called to see us on her arrival, as she had always done when coming to Chaumes for the holidays.

She was the prettiest girl far and near;

tall, cheerful, and as light as a feather. It was not possible to see a lovelier head of fair hair nor more intelligent soft blue eyes. Yet she was a Rantzau, and their spirit was in her. One could not help laughing at her satirical way and look when she spoke of her *kind* uncle Jacques, his good-natured face, tender looks, and her cousin George's beard.

It was easy to see she had been to Molsheim, where the good sisters, as Monsieur Jacques used to say, were preserved in the sugar of charity. Louise was very good and truthful at heart for all that.

My two best scholars having come home again, I looked forward to the pleasure of calling on them now and then, and of spending a more pleasant existence. I was equally fond of both, they were attached to me in return — and that was the chief point, for we all have our faults, and the best way is not to notice those of others.

Two or three days later, one Thursday afternoon, towards one o'clock, Mdlle. Suzanne, who was the curé's old servant, came to tell me that her master was waiting in the garden of the presbytery for me to assist him in taking the honey from his hives.

I followed her directly. It was a fine, warm autumn day, and bees were swarming by thousands in the air.

Monsieur le Curé had got our masks out, to which were appended long collars for the neck and shoulders, like the capes which are joined to chimney-sweepers' hoods; our gloves, of coarse linen, reached above the elbows. I had taken care to draw my boots over my trousers, for bees do not relish being robbed of their honey, and resent the theft by filling every aperture they can get into. Large sharp spoons and honey-pots stood by, with a piece of linen rag, which I was going to burn and fumigate the hives with.

I arrived in high spirits, and found the curé no less well-disposed for the work.

"We shall have a very large quantity this year, Monsieur Florent," said he; "I would not mind betting there are thirty pounds' weight of honey, putting all the hives together."

"There is no knowing, Monsieur le Curé," I replied; "we often find a great deal where we did not expect much, and nothing where we fancied we should have a great deal. Then we must leave a quantity in reserve for the bees' food next winter. After this very hot summer we may expect severe cold."

"Quite correct, Monsieur Florent! Let us put on our things."

The curé took off his cassock; and when I had changed my coat for a blouse, we put on our masks, drew up our gloves, and pulled down our capes. I then told Suzanne she was to shut all the windows so as not to lose many bees, for these insects persist in pursuing one into the farthest corners of rooms. When all this was done I went into the kitchen, placed a few burning pieces of charcoal on a shovel, and came back to the hives.

Any one would have thought the bees knew what we were about, for, although they allowed us to approach them every day, they now covered us from head to foot, buzzing about our masks in great excitement; but of no avail, for their honey had to be taken.

I commenced smoking them out by holding a piece of rag over the burning embers in front of the three middle hives, Monsieur le Curé blowing meanwhile. I then went to the back and turned the first hive upside down, all the bees having flown out with the exception of a few which hung about as if benumbed. The curé held the pots, and I began to cut the under layers of honeycomb out, placing the snowy flakes delicately one on the top of the other, out of which streamed the most transparent golden-coloured honey.

The heat being excessive, many bees returned to the hives, and we had to smoke them out a second time.

We thus went through Monsieur Jannequin's ten hives, taking great care of the younger swarms that had not yet had time to lay in all their provisions. True enough, we had over thirty pounds' weight of honey, eight large pots being quite full. I had been cautious not to hurt the grubs rolled up in their cells, for they are the hope of the future, and none but the unskilful ever make havoc among them.

We now restored everything to order, plastering a layer of fuller's earth mixed with cow-dung at the bottom of each hive to keep the cold out. There is no other word to define the nature of the substance thus mixed; but, however crude it may sound, it is a good hint to apiarists.

We had attended to everything and were just going in, when we heard some very loud shouts and whipping in the lane at the back of Monsieur le Curé's hedge. It was a large cart coming down; our infuriated bees had settled on the driver and the people with him.



"Confound the bees!" was the cry. "Allons, can't you get on?—quick! Devil take the bees! wherever do they come from?"

These questions were being asked by a stranger, and one of our peasants replied,—

"Those bees, monsieur? They belong to our curé."

"Ah!" exclaimed the stranger; "of course they do; they could not belong to any one else but a curé."

He then relieved himself of a volley of epithets against all Jesuits and priests, so that when the cart had gone by we had a good laugh, and Monsieur le Curé good-humouredly said,—

"Here's one who has not spared abuse of me! He must be a factory-man—a stranger."

"A Parisian, I dare say," replied I. "He has been stung anyhow."

I held the branches aside and perceived, at about ten steps from the gap I looked through, an immense vehicle, on the top of which was an enormous package of deal wood. One of Monsieur Jean's servants, old Dominique, led the horse by the bridle, and a stranger walked by, holding his handkerchief up to his nose.

Whatever could that package be? I wondered. I saw it was for Monsieur Jean, and that it had come from some distance. Thinking over it, we carried the pots to a small back room in which Monsieur Jannequin kept his plants and tools in winter.

Suzanne ran away as fast as she could. The windows were covered with bees, and Monsieur le Curé was much amused at her fright, calling, "Suzanne, come and taste our honey!"

"Thank you, monsieur, I can taste it later," she replied, hiding behind the door. Amid laughter and quizzing we fumigated our coats, and when the bees had dropped we took our disguise off.

As I have said, the quantity of honey we took was enormous; the curé fetched a plate, on which he placed three of the finest honeycombs.

"This is your part, my dear Monsieur Florent," said he. "I thank you for the assistance you have given me."

"I am quite at your service, Monsieur le Curé."

"I know, and am much obliged to you," said he, taking me out. "Au revoir."

I then left with my plate, which I carefully covered, for though the operation

had been performed an hour ago, thousands of bees, half intoxicated by the smoke, were swarming about everywhere. They were now beginning to go back to their hives, and not more than three or four pursued me and my honey.

When I got to the school-house, I closed the door as soon as I was in, and my wife and Juliette carried the plate into the cool pantry, admiring the honeycombs all the way.

"Have you seen a large cart go by?" asked my wife, while I stood washing my hands and face in the kitchen.

"I have."

"Well, the whole village is wondering about it."

"Was not the driver stung?"

"He was, right under the nose, and on his neck; but that is not what people are talking about. They say a magnificent piece of furniture has arrived, a beautiful piano Monsieur Jean has ordered from Paris for his daughter. Madame Bouveret declares there never was anything like it."

On hearing this I thought I would like to look at it. I had for some time wished to see an instrument of real Paris make. Our pianos in Lorraine had only three octaves, and came from Harchkirch. I may say, without the least desire to injure the manufacturers of our country, that they murdered them and did not make them. Their instruments never kept in tune; one had to hold the tuning-fork continually, and wind them up by half a tone all the time. Then the swelling of the wood in autumn, and the grating of all the chords getting unstrung! It would have been wise to put down in black and white all the qualities their makers attributed to them, before they were paid for, as I did with the cows of Elias. By dint of changing, one might perhaps have fallen on a good piano out of fifty.

My wife was just as curious as I was to see the instrument, but I told her she could wait till the next day, whereas I only had Thursday afternoons to myself. On leaving I promised to be back by supper-time.

As I went down the street I saw a group of neighbours standing in front of Monsieur Jean's house; others were coming that way; girls carrying dead leaves in grey linen cloths threw their burden down to look in through the open windows.

Louise must have seen me coming, for she ran down to meet me.

"Oh, Monsieur Florent," said she, "here you are just in time; walk in. Come and look at the beautiful piano father has bought me."

"That is what brings me here, my dear," said I, going into the best room, which had been newly papered with a beautiful sky-blue leaf-pattern.

The piano stood between the two windows that looked out on the street.

Monsieur Jean, with his large bald forehead, was walking up and down in deep thought, and his arms crossed behind him.

"Ah! so here you are, Monsieur Florent: you have come to see our piano?" he asked, stopping in front of me. "Well, now look at it; what is your opinion?"

He seemed quite proud, and not without cause, for it was a splendid piece of furniture, and surpassed my expectations. It was made of rosewood, shone like a mirror, and had gilt bronze handles. It was somewhat in the shape of a chiffonier, and any one could guess by its outward appearance that it was first-rate. No such finish is wasted on Harchkirch instruments; but all I could have imagined was nothing compared to what I was soon to hear.

Louise, in her great eagerness to display her musical talent, hastily opened the piano and exhibited the ivory and ebony notes on which the sun now shone, then she ran up and down the keys with her white taper fingers as fast as lightning. The different sounds of the flute and hautbois at the top, and the full, sonorous bass tones at the bottom sent me off in a perfect ecstasy.

Louise was much more of a proficient in music than I was. Her fingering showed that a great deal of trouble had been taken with her accomplishments at Molsheim, and it is but justice here to say a good word for the sisters, they did not neglect the fine arts.

Only, if I may be allowed an observation, the harmonious blending or union of chords one in the other, which can only be obtained by organ practice, on which instrument all sounds have gradually to swell, and the passage of one tone to another, which we call fugue, — a thing old Monsieur Labadie so excelled in, — besides a few other details of expression, were wanting in Louise's performance. It does not ensue that it was at all an indifferent one, no, it was not; though her haste to show all she could do was perhaps her cause of not keeping perfect

time; but I had no fault to find with her. I told her I was very much pleased, and congratulated her, saying I was proud to call her my scholar, at which her eyes sparkled.

"So, really, you are satisfied, dear Monsieur Florent?" she asked.

"I am indeed; you do me great credit in every respect, my dear."

"Then please do sit down," she exclaimed. "I must sing to you now. You will accompany me, Monsieur Florent, and sing with me."

"What are you thinking of, my dear?" I exclaimed. "I sing with you? I know nothing but church music: Kyries, Glorias, Alleluias."

"What does that signify? We can sing church music. At the convent chapel I used to take the contralto parts. You have such a fine bass voice, Monsieur Florent! We must sing together."

Finding she had made up her mind to it, I sent one of my barefooted scholars, who was looking in at the window, to fetch the organ book at my house. Off he went in the dust, and came back five minutes later with the right copy.

Monsieur Jean, who knew no other will than that of his daughter, seemed pleased at the idea of hearing us sing together. I opened my book, after placing it carefully on the polished music-stand, then beat the preliminary one — two — three, and we both started on a grand Kyrie just as if it were full cathedral service.

"Kyrie-e-e, Kyrie-e-e-e eleison."

I never should have believed Louise had such a fine voice if any one had told me. It was full-toned, touching, and went up — up — as high as heaven. At first a shudder crept over me, and I opened my eyes very wide, thinking we were going up higher and higher still. The notes were fortunately written down before us, and we had to keep following them.

As nothing encourages and stimulates so much as feeling one's self supported by a magnificent voice, I don't remember ever having sung so well in my life. I actually considered my bass was a worthy accompaniment to such singing.

This is the result of emulation. When a man has to accompany himself on a worn-out, asthmatic organ in a low church without any echo, in which five or six choir-boys are shrieking out in a straggling sort of way to aged people who don't even listen, because they have grown deaf, then he may pull out all the

stops, swell his voice, hold down the pedals, and yet the result will be most depressing, perfect wretchedness.

What a difference !

Monsieur Jean had thrown the windows open so that all the village could hear ; but we did not think of the people who were listening, going from an *Alléluia* to a *Salutaris* in raptures and enthusiasm.

I was just like a child, playing everything Louise told me. The evening set in so rapidly it was as if the afternoon had lasted one minute. Then only, towards dusk, did I remember it was supper-time, and suddenly rose.

"Whatever will my wife and Juliette say?" exclaimed I ; "they are waiting for supper."

Monsieur Jean laughed and asked me to take supper with them, but having promised at home, I did not think that was quite proper ; so I left, followed by Louise and her father, who saw me out, the old man saying,—

"The notes work very well, certainly, and those Parisians do make first-rate instruments, but they cost a pretty sum. Now, just guess what I have been charged for that piano, Monsieur Florent."

"Not a bit too much, Monsieur Rantzau," replied I ; "when a thing is perfect, it is never too dear."

"Well, no, in one sense," said he laughing ; "but a two thousand franc piano !"

"Bah ! that is not too much for you to spend."

"As to that, I can afford it ; still, two thousand francs are two thousand francs, Monsieur Florent. I shall have to sell bushels of salt, and many a cartload of hay and straw, before I make that sum up again. Two thousand francs ! The Parisians can't be losers by the piano-forte business ; they must make a good thing out of it, eh ?"

"It is right they should, Monsieur Rantzau ; where there is merit there should be the reward."

"I have nothing to say to the contrary," said Monsieur Jean.

Talking thus we came to the door ; the people who had gathered were going away.

"You will come back another time, will you not ?" said Louise, holding out her hand.

"As often as I can, my dear."

On turning to wish her and Monsieur Jean "good night" I perceived George behind the leafy hedgerow at the back of his father's garden opposite. He was stooping down to hide ; he had most cer-

tainly heard us, and perhaps had been listening.

As I walked homewards I looked back on the pleasures of the past day, and thought of the enjoyment I should have when I could accept Louise's invitation in the future. I told my wife and Juliette all that had occurred while we ate our supper, after which we went to bed under the safe watch of the Almighty.

#### CHAPTER XI.

EVERYTHING went on smoothly now. After five and twenty years' toil I was beginning to reap the fruit of my labour.

Paul was completing his studies at the Normal School, on leaving which institution he would certainly have a good situation.

Juliette had as much work as she could do. I and my wife were in good health, thank God ; my two best pupils had returned ; everybody liked me ; what more could I desire ? I considered myself the happiest of men. Nevertheless a very disagreeable thing happened at this time.

I went to see Louise on the following Thursday, carrying her some pretty pieces by Mozart that I had hunted up in Father Labadie's old music scores.

On reaching Monsieur Jean's house I found him standing at the window in an extraordinary passion.

"Now come here, Monsieur Florent," said he, drawing the curtains aside as soon as I entered ; "please look out. Did you ever see a more abominable thing in your life than that man's face opposite ?"

He pointed to his brother Jacques, who just then was sitting in shirt-sleeves on a bundle of straw at the corner of his barn and pleasantly taking a pinch of snuff.

I could not see what he was doing to offend Monsieur Jean, who now began to walk up and down in the room.

"Last year," continued he, "that old wretch had his grain thrashed in the barn at the back, where he also opened his ventilator to avoid our all being stifled with the dust, for it comes in his house as well as mine ; but this year, in order to prevent Louise from going on with her music, he has given orders for his thrashing to commence three weeks earlier than usual, and opens his barn right opposite. His idea is to deafen us with the noise, and thus force us to close our windows. Does not such a brute deserve to be sent to Toulon, and have all the skin peeled off his back with a horsewhip ?"

I had never seen Monsieur Jean in so violent a passion, and, as the unfortunate tic-tac over the way did not cease, while dust filled the air, I had nothing to answer on the spur of the moment; but, after a little reflection, I said,—

"It is very annoying, Monsieur Rantau; but Monsieur Jacques may not have thought of all this. He may have other reasons for thrashing his grain on the front side of his house; we cannot tell. It is always better to put the best construction on things, and not look on the dark side."

"You are a kind-hearted man, Monsieur Florent, and have to keep on good terms with everybody; neither do I blame you, for, situated as you are, that brigand might take it into his head to turn you out of the Mairie if you were not very cautious; but I tell you things are as I say. I have known him long enough, and I tell you he thinks of nothing but evil; his only enjoyment is to vex others and injure his neighbours. He is always ruminating and turning over in his mind how he can harm the innocent. He is too much of a coward to attempt an open attack, and, besides, he is afraid of the treadmill; but, if he were as brave as he is perverse, you would see strange things come to pass until he would, of course, be stopped by the authorities. Oh, the miserable wretch! And, then, to think the Almighty ordains we should have such brothers! Look; now do look at him. Wouldn't any one swear he is an old Jew, an old usurer, planning the ruin of his relatives?"

Monsieur Jean did not consider that he was himself the picture of his brother, only that he was bald and Monsieur Jacques' hair was grey.

Passion had totally blinded him; seeing which, and not feeling inclined to get mixed up in the new quarrel, I put the books on the piano.

"Do not take this little disappointment to heart, my dear," said I to Louise. "I had brought you some music, but as we cannot play on account of the din, I will come back next Sunday after vespers, and we will try the new pieces. Monsieur Jacques will not be able to have his grain thrashed on the holy day of rest, you know."

Bowing to Monsieur Jean, I then left by the back door, for, if I had crossed the street, Monsieur Jacques would have called to ask me how I was, and might have shaken hands with me to his brother's face. I therefore went down

the garden-lane, thinking, as I went, of the abominable consequences of family feuds.

I could see Monsieur Jacques' sly smile of satisfaction as he sat on his sheaves in front of his barn; but I could not bring myself to believe all Monsieur Jean thought of him. He had certainly gone too far.

On that same Thursday evening, after supper, George looked in on his return home from his father's saw-mill at Saarrouge.

"I have brought you a piece of white heath, which I gathered on the heights, Monsieur Florent," said he pleasantly; "I thought you would be pleased to have it."

"So I am, George; sit down, I have one or two specimens, but not of that family. This is a rare one. Bring out the brandy-cherries, Marie-Barbe; George won't refuse to take one or two with me?"

"By no means," said George, sitting down. When my wife had placed the cherries before us, we talked of the high table-lands on which white heath grows, of the saw-mills, the sale of timber, valuations, and felling. Finally, I came to the barn subject, which was uppermost on my mind.

"By the way, George," said I, "you are now having your barley and oats thrashed in the front barn! Would you believe your uncle Jean fancies you do that to prevent Louise from practising her piano! I of course don't believe anything of the kind, but he —"

George burst out laughing.

"Well, upon my word, Monsieur Florent," said he, "that squealing and thumping on a piano from morning to night is a fearful nuisance."

"George!" I exclaimed, "how can you call that squealing—you who have learnt music at college, and who play so nicely on the flute? Louise sings, sir, with much taste and talent. She has a splendid voice."

My wife, who was sitting in the window-seat, made me a sign to hold my tongue, but I could not hear such an untruth without feeling concerned.

"Maybe," replied George; "I don't deny it; but," added he, reddening, "my father is not fond of the piano. Every one has a right to play on the instrument he likes best."

I shook my head as much as to say his reasons were very bad ones; and he continued, "Now, Monsieur Florent, do say whether you think it is pleasant to have

such a scoundrel as that living in grandfather's house, which he has robbed us of, and then to see him buy two thousand franc pianos out of our money."

"Allons, allons!" cried I, getting warm in spite of my wife's signs, "this is going a little too far! We will say no more about it, we should disagree. Louise has robbed nothing at all, sir; it is none of the child's fault. I have discovered many very good qualities in her, and I am very fond of her. I am grieved to see you and your father do all you can to annoy her."

My wife fidgeted about tremendously, but my heart was too full. George stared at me, and I went on,—

"I should very much like to know, sir, whether there is a prettier girl in all the Saarbourg arrondissement, or one who is more lady-like any where, than your cousin? I am not a Rantzau, and I have not the slightest desire to flatter them, but if I had the honour to belong to the first family of the country, I should not go about finding fault with my own relatives; I should feel proud of all who did the race any credit. That is my frank opinion, and those are the very words I should tell Louise if she said anything behind your back."

Seeing I was grieved, George suddenly held out his hand, and said he hoped he had not offended me.

"Offended me!" I cried, "not at all; I am only fond of my old scholars, especially those who deserve my esteem, and you are one, George. That is why your injustice concerns me; if you were any one else, I should not so much care."

"You are quite right, Monsieur Florent," said he, with a softened voice. "I love you all the more for it. It is a pity," he continued, rising, "that everybody is not of your mind. Good night, Madame Florent; good night, Juliette." Then turning and pressing my hand, he added, "If it is agreeable to you, my dear master, we will some day take a stroll up in the mountains together. I should like you to see how lovely the country is round about the springs of the Saar."

"Wherever you like, George. I am always happy to go out and have a talk with you."

I took him down-stairs, and when he had gone I congratulated myself on having for once said what had been so long on my heart; but my wife blamed my conduct, and declared I should soon get between Monsieur Jean and Monsieur Jacques in the position of a nail between

the hammer and anvil, that is — I should come in for all the blows.

"I don't care if I do," I replied.

I had evidently taken too many cherries and lost sight of danger. "If these people seek to do me evil because I seek their good, God will punish them; they will repent of it."

This is what a man is led to through following his inclinations; he is sure to commit the most incautious deeds.

I approved of my new line of conduct the whole of the following night, even in my dreams, but the next day I perceived I had been very rash, and, had the opportunity occurred, I should have retracted my words. However, no evil consequences ensued, for two or three days later George came to fetch me. He had put on a mountaineer suit, a blouse and broad-brimmed hat, and held a strong stick in his hand. I saw he had a mind to go up to the saw-mills, and feeling no less exuberant than he at the prospect of a climb, I hastily put the brandy flagon in my pocket and a crust or so in my bag.

Although I had reached fifty I was still a good walker, being rather spare and of a nervous temperament. Then, the beauty of the scenery, the light and shade in the branches, the hoary trees, the ivy, moss, and cool streamlets leaping over beds of gravels between the rocks, the insects dancing on a sunbeam, the velvety woodland flies, and many other things besides, all contributed so to enliven and vivify me that I felt twenty again! Neither is this all. After a good stretch up hill and down again, through broom, heather, and dried twigs, what a pleasure to view in the distance a secluded valley through which winds a river, and close by a saw-mill, with its small bridge, its heavy wheel, pond, and lots of planks in fan-like rows; while in the midst of all this, the wood-cutter stops thinning the trunk before him, to look up and watch us approach from afar; meantime the paddling of the wheel and the rush of the water underneath the dykes fill solitude with their busy noise, and male and female buzzards pursue each other in wide circles above the pine-woods!

These were the sounds and scenes that soothed and rested me, these I delighted in.

As to George, his business was the valuation of timber; he had a wonderful eye for it.

"How many square metres of fuel do you suppose there are in that fir-tree?" would I ask.



"So, and so many," was the reply.

"And in that beech-tree?"

"So, and so many."

He never made a mistake, his father having taught him a good deal in this line when a boy, and he had since been greatly helped by arithmetic and logarithms.

There was no doubt about his becoming a famous timber merchant; and although my tastes were quite different, I was happy to see he was likely to be a thorough man of business.

We had left Chaumes at five; at half-past nine we reached the foot of the great Langin heights, in which Saar-rouge takes its rise, and stood in a narrow defile, covered here and there with black patches, which showed this to be a spot used for the burning of charcoal.

There was not a soul in the place; the last awnings had been dismounted and carried towards the forges in the valley; nothing was left but the charcoalmakers' hut standing by the side of a spring that was overrun with watercress.

George put his hand through a hole in the door, drew the latch inside, and when we had entered he piled the remains of blackened logs and some dry firwood on the hearth; struck a few sparks, shook the lighted tinder among a handful of dry fern, which instantly took fire, and smoke curled above the lone woods.

This is the way primeval man first proceeded: nothing better has since been invented; but in those early times this smoke rising from virgin forests was a sign that the human soul had awaked, and that wild beasts had a master. I have read that in some book, I do not remember where.

When the fire was bright George took two smoked sausages out of his bag, which he buried in the hot ashes; I produced my flagon, and we sat down very cheerfully.

The savoury smell of the sausages filled the interior of the hut; thrushes and blue tomtits, birds that love to hover round human dwellings, hopped and chirruped outside. When the sausages were quite done we ate our meal with great appetite, each making his knife supply the place of a fork; a gentle wind rising among the leaves meanwhile cooled us.

I should not have wished for a pleasanter or happier life, if the accomplishment of our duties had not called us back to the village.

We rested until eleven, then took up our sticks, and joyfully trudged on to the

saw-mills, where George cast up an account of the planks, beams, and cubic metres of logwood belonging to his father. Cartloads were still being brought in from a neighbouring coppice; whole trunks, covered with their bark, were hung by bright chains to chariots drawn by reddish-coloured bullocks. These young animals fastened their feet in the rock, straining every nerve as they pulled, struggling on with haggard eyes under the driver's whip.

We heard the grating of the wheels a long way off. The ruts in the gravel-roads at the foot of the slope were full of water, as rapid and clear as quicksilver. It cooled the poor animals' feet.

All round the defile mountain peaks rose against the sky; the beauty of the country could not be surpassed. The smacking of whips in the valley, the prolonged shout of the woodmen and carriers calling from one mountain to the other, the sound of the axe high above in the trees, the tinkling bell of some stray animal seeking pasture, — were sounds that joined in the great hum of solitude, and blended with the rustle of leaves and the monotonous fall of the river.

What movement and what life, even in such apparent deserted places as these! Labour, work — coalmen, woodcutters, cattle, and all, have to toil summer and winter. But this grand sight conveys an idea too of rest; it raises the soul to the contemplation of eternity.

I considered all this sitting on the bridge, with my legs dangling over the parapet, and looking at the old pond half covered with sawdust. Floaters were here making one of those rafts which swim down the Saar as far as Saarbrück.

Meanwhile George had finished his work, taken down all his notes, and now made me a sign to start anew. We were both much rested.

We took the rugged path, full of knotty roots, which runs along the heights above the cart-road. It was very sultry. Crickets and grasshoppers rose by clouds, chasing each other at our feet. Numerous green, swollen-out lizards were panting on the burning sand, scarcely able to drag themselves along to the coppice close by, surfeited, as they were, with the insects they had feasted on. We were bathed in moisture, and walked on under the shade of the dark pine-wood in silence, each indulging in a day-dream of his own.

The distant days of my youth rose be-

fore me. I recalled my arrival at Chaumes; the first things that struck me; the things I took pleasure in; the beginning of my friendship with Father Labadie; my respectful love for his daughter, who was always sewing and mending old clothes, now and then casting a timid glance my way; and then I remembered our first words, and my first questions, when she gently withdrew her hand, and said in a tremble, turning aside, "Ask my father, Monsieur Florent." Then, though I was as bashful as she was, our avowals, the promises, the solitary walks, my reveries up the hill, when I would wonder where she was, what she was doing, what she was thinking of. Ah, love and matrimony!

The forests we were going through reminded me also of the many Thursdays spent here in those bygone times.

I do not know what George was thinking of, but he looked very serious, and suddenly, on perceiving the light break through the yet distant outskirts of the forest, he exclaimed, —

"You are a very good walker, Monsieur Florent; are you not tired out?"

"No; I never feel fatigue when I am thinking."

"What are you thinking of?"

"Oh, many things! Of the past — of life. You will know later, George, what a man thinks of when he gets on in age. You are now too young; I cannot explain exactly. You have nothing to do with the past as yet. But what is it *you* have been thinking of?"

"I? — really I could not tell."

Talking thus, we entered the road leading to our valley. It was bordered on one side by the forest; on the other it was divided by a hedge from the grass-fields; beyond, ran the river through Monsieur Jean's meadow.

The weather being very hot that year, harvesting was still going on, and we heard the laugh of peasant-girls making hay. Through the long grass and bulrushes we could see a cart, which had been heavily laden, just coming down a sandy path on the opposite bank towards the river. It was intended it should wade through the water, which was very low on account of the dryness. Whenever the wheels sunk in the wet sand it swayed to and fro, and more and more as the ruts became deeper.

Men and women, with rakes on their shoulders, were looking at it. Monsieur Jean's black and white oxen were majestically walking in front, and Louise

brought up the rear in a blue cotton dress and broad-brimmed, flapping straw hat. Her lovely hair fell in slight disorder about her neck, her cheeks were glowing with animation, and she seemed to be telling the women that the road was very bad, that the cart was not properly loaded, and threatened to fall over each time it rocked from side to side.

We could not hear what she said; we only guessed from her manner the sense of her looks and gestures as we stood admiring the pretty picture framed in by the high mountains around.

George appeared very attentive.

"That crop," said he, after a moment, "is very badly stacked; it will all topple over!"

He smiled when the vehicle got in the water and the sand seemed to give way.

A minute later we witnessed the most extraordinary scene. The frightened women threw up their arms in great terror, rending the air with their shrieks. Louise, as quick as lightning, ran down to the river, stepped in, and, with her pitchfork supporting the cart on the side it was leaning over, pushed it back as long as she could, crying, —

"Here, here, help! — don't be afraid!"

But the other women, seeing the danger, did not hasten to join her. Her feeble efforts were insufficient to keep up the falling load; the cart threatened to turn over and crush her.

I shuddered — when George, with a leap, cleared the hedge, and, flying over every obstacle, rushed on; then down the bank, falling knee-deep in the water; in a moment he had snatched the pitchfork from his cousin's hand, and, with fearful might, thrust back the avalanche, which was well-nigh smothering them both, calling out in a wild passion, —

"Hue! hue! — mille tonnerres! — whip your beasts on! — pull! — pull!"

The women and girls, now seeing all danger over, ran to the rescue, pushing up the load with their rakes, while old Dominique at the front was belabouring the oxen with the stick end of his whip. They pulled in good earnest, quite scared by the noise, and the big cart gaining its equilibrium, by degrees reached the opposite side of the river; the crop was saved.

The valley echoed with joyous shouts, and George returned the pitchfork to Louise, saying with a strange smile, "I just came in good time, didn't I?"

"Indeed you did," replied Louise with a blush. "Thank you, George."

She showed her wet stockings to the women, pulling aside her drenched skirt, and laughingly saying, "See what a state I am in, and my shoes are full of sand!" They stood round her all laughing too; I then looked at George, who came back with long strides, he was very pale, and his curly hair stood up all round his head.

"Well done, my boy!" I cried. "Now what say you of this pianoforte performer? She is not chicken-hearted, is she?"

"No, she is a Rantzau," replied he, picking up his hat, which he had lost in the hedge. "I fancied the whole crop would go swimming down the river, it was so badly laden. My cousin has been at a convent, you see. The pole should have been tied down the middle and firmly on to the back. At convent-schools girls don't learn that sort of thing; they are taught how to sing."

"Yes," I replied, "they sing, and, what is more, they sing very well; a thing that did not hinder you from showing a good deal of pluck."

I saw this vexed him, and said nothing more on the subject, but went on in silence towards the village, the cart following us some four hundred steps behind. The pole had been replaced and the ropes tightened, so that the forage above was all straight, and the women were sitting on the top of it. I could see Louise tying a bough of leaves on the ladder. George walked on in advance of me, for I kept turning round. When he reached the bend of the valley he let something drop, and stopped to look for it in the high grass. When he caught me up after his search, he told me he had lost his flint, but had found it again. We now entered the village.

"Good evening, Monsieur Florent," said George, when we came to my door. "If you don't mind, we will go out again another day."

"We have had a very nice walk, George," answered I, "and I hope it will not be our last."

He departed, and I went up to the sitting-room, where my wife and Juliette were very pleased to see me back again. I had but time to go into my little closet and there change my linen when it was supper-time.

The singing of the haymakers was heard for awhile after we had sat down to table. Juliette jumped up to look out of the window, then came back saying, "It is the last crop of the season; they

have the bouquet on their ladder, and Mademoiselle Louise is with them. It may rain as much as it likes, the harvest is all gathered in now."

From The Saturday Review.

#### THE WEST COAST OF AFRICA.

To the majority of Englishmen our West African possessions are only associated in a dim sort of manner with ivory, gold dust, palm oil, slaves, the King of Dahomey and his "customs." Some who have indulged in discursive reading may bethink them of Governor Wall, who flogged a soldier to death and was hanged in consequence, and of "L. E. L.," whose melancholy fate is still within the memory of contemporary history. Other conscientious devourers of the daily papers may remember that every now and then an African mail has brought intelligence concerning the quarrels of two rural potentates called Ja Ja and Oko Jumbo. We doubt much whether there are many, even among educated people, who could tell the names, or even the approximate positions, of our settlements on the West Coast of Africa. One reason may be that nobody goes there who can help doing so, and that very few who do go return. Yet our West African settlements are important in more ways than one. It is undoubted that they exercise a civilizing influence on the savage races which surround them; and if we abandoned them to-morrow, it would not be easy to prevent the revival of the slave-trade. As regards commerce also they ought to excite our interest, the value of the imports and exports being about a million and twelve hundred thousand pounds sterling respectively. Attention is now specially directed to Cape Coast Castle, on account of the invasion of that settlement by the Ashantees, who, having won a victory over some tribes nominally under our protection, were at the date of the despatch of the last mail within six hours' march of the seat of government.

The most northerly, and at the same time the oldest, of all our settlements on the coast is the Gambia, which is called after the river of that name. This river falls into the Atlantic a little to the south of Cape Verde, and, by means of it, intercourse with the interior of Africa, to a distance of several hundred miles, is carried on. The capital is Bathurst, situated on an island near the mouth of the

river. This is a mere trading settlement, with scarcely any territory attached to it. Originally formed in 1588 by a Company which received a charter from Queen Elizabeth, the staple of its commerce long consisted in slaves. Proceeding to the South, we come to Sierra Leone, the seat of the Governor of all the West African settlements, and situated 8° 30m north of the Equator. This colony was ceded to the British in 1787, and comprises a considerable amount of territory.

Between Sierra Leone and the Equator is a tract of Upper Guinea, known as the Gold Coast. Its capital is Cape Coast Castle, and it is the scene of the present disturbances. The colony comprises several minor settlements, of which Accra and Elmina—recently ceded by the Dutch—are the chief. It was founded by the African Company in 1750, under authority of an Act of Parliament. To the eastward of the Gold Coast is Lagos, the most recent, but, as far as regards imports and exports, the most important, of all our settlements in Western Africa. It was only acquired in 1862, when Docemo, the native king—who is still alive—ceded it to us in return for a pension of 1,000*l.* a year. Formerly it was the greatest slave depôt on the coast, and its possession by us has greatly contributed to the suppression of that traffic. It must not, however, be supposed that the neighbouring tribes would quietly submit to see their principal source of riches cut off; and, though awed by the vigour of successive Administrators—notably the last, Captain Glover—they have never ceased to give trouble. Their chief grievance is that runaway slaves have found at Lagos a secure asylum under shelter of the British flag, which, however, during Captain Glover's absence on leave, did not last year always prove a very efficient protection. Indeed on more than one occasion escaped slaves were by the aid of the ex-King Docemo carried off within sight of Government House. Two of these hapless captives committed suicide rather than again go into bondage. The troublesome tribes in question are the Egbas and Ijebus, sometimes called Jebus; and, in addition to the slave grievance, they have lately conceived that they were suffering under another wrong. They have for years past been engaged in intermittent war with a tribe to the eastward of their own territories, called Yorubas. These hostilities, of course, have been a great hindrance to commercial intercourse with the interior

—an intercourse which the Yorubas, who are friendly to the British, and fully alive to the value of trade, have been ever anxious to maintain. The Egbas and Ijebus are the great obstacle to this, and levy heavy transit dues on all goods passing through their territory. Thinking that it depended on them to arrest all trade—and frequently they have thoroughly paralyzed it—these savages have acted as if they were the masters of the situation, and in a position to bring pressure on the British authorities. In order to checkmate them, Captain Glover nearly two years ago determined to despatch a pioneer expedition in order to open up the country and to secure an alternative route to that which passed through the Egba and Jebu territory. The envoy, Mr. Roger Goldsworthy, an ex-officer of Lancers, and now Commandant of the Houssa armed police at Lagos, underwent serious risks and great hardships, but was completely successful. He found the Yorubas quite prepared to keep open the new route, and he established the most friendly relations with them. The Egbas and Ijebus, furious at seeing their power for mischief passing away from them, and conscious that if the new route were adopted the administration of Lagos would be independent of them, sought to baffle Captain Glover's scheme by means of intrigue. They found zealous coadjutors in the ex-King Docemo, and in both white and black partisans at the settlement. A new policy was instituted. The new road was not taken advantage of, and the result has been an almost complete paralysis of commerce, a great rise in prices at Lagos, the abduction of refugee slaves, and a spirit of determined hostility to British rule. Indeed, both Docemo and the two tribes above mentioned have openly avowed their intention of getting rid of the white strangers altogether.

It is, however, on the Gold Coast that the attention of the few who take an interest in West African affairs is at the present moment concentrated. Besides the settlements on the coast occupied by us, a considerable tract of country inhabited by the neighbouring tribes was years ago formally received under our protection. These tribes are collectively styled Fantees, or the Fantee Confederation. The Confederation, however, owing to discouragement received from us, is little more than nominal, and is only an agglomeration of independent clans, friendly to each other and loosely united from

fear of their hereditary foe the King of Ashantee. The Colonial Office has formally approved of the principle of a Confederation, but has done nothing to promote it, and, rightly or wrongly, the Fantees are under the impression that their project is viewed with contempt by the local authorities. The Fantees, however, with wits sharpened by the instincts of self-preservation, foresaw the imminence of the danger which their so-called protectors failed to recognize, and the event has justified the note of alarm which they sounded. The Ashantees, indeed, are a formidable enemy, and have on two previous occasions given us much trouble. Formerly they held sway over the Fantee country and over the maritime district which we now occupy, and it was our wrestling from them the seaboard and denying the sovereignty over the Fantees which brought about the war of 1824. Some rather sharp fighting took place, and ultimate success was only purchased by the expenditure of much money, and the loss of Sir Charles Macarthy, the Governor. For nearly forty years a sort of armed truce was observed, but in 1863 the King of Ashantee again declared war—a war which cost us 100,000*l.*, and one in which for months our troops endeavoured with much loss from sickness to bring the enemy to action, but in vain. Since then we have pursued a policy of conciliation, not to say subserviency, sending presents with the messengers who proposed—or, as rendered by the natives, “sued for”—peace. All our efforts have, however, failed, and now for the third time within half a century we are at war with this fierce and untamable race.

What the cause of the rupture was no one seems quite able to say. The general belief is that the cession of Elmina to us by the Dutch has something to do with it. Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen is of this opinion. It appears that the Dutch used not only to give a yearly sum of money to the King of Ashantee, but also to pay him so much per head for the captives he made in war. These captives were sent to serve as soldiers in other Dutch settlements, and certainly gained by the change of masters. When we took over Elmina, we made inquiries concerning this subsidy, and, learning that it was given not as tribute but merely for the encouragement of trade, determined not to continue it. Of course head money for slaves, under any circumstances, was out of the question. Irri-

tated at such a sensible diminution of his revenue, the King of Ashantee, misinterpreting our conciliatory behaviour, presumed on our supposed weakness, and snatched at what he considered a favourable opportunity for driving us into the sea. Early in January last the Ashantees, in four divisions, and with numbers variously estimated by those on the spot at sixty thousand and eighty thousand men, crossed the Fantee frontier. Recent advices, however, tend to show that their strength has been exaggerated, and that the main body at all events is not more than thirty thousand strong. The border is only three days' journey from Cape Coast Castle, yet it does not appear that the Administrator took any steps to obtain trustworthy information. He never even noticed the invasion till the 3rd of February, and then he contented himself with a mere proclamation announcing the invasion, and prohibiting the supply to the invaders of munitions of war. The Ashantees in the meantime had themselves announced their arrival in the most energetic manner, having marched through the country plundering and burning in every direction. Taken by surprise at first, only 4,000 or 5,000 Fantees could be collected to oppose the enemy, before whom they were of course obliged to retreat. At length, however, the different chiefs managed to assemble an army of some 30,000 men, and a battle whose dimensions would have been considered respectable even in Europe took place. The numbers were about equal on each side, but the Ashantees possessed the advantage of being under a single commander, while the Fantees were a mere collection of clans each obeying only the order of its immediate chief. The fight was well contested, having lasted some eight or nine hours. At length the Fantees, having lost 1,000 men, and being short of ammunition, were obliged to retire, falling back, however, so steadily that the victors contented themselves with occupying the abandoned position. At this place, only seventeen miles from Cape Coast Castle, the Ashantees, who, though the conquerors, lost, it is said, 2,000 men in the battle, remained for some time waiting for reinforcements. We learn that the King of the Ashantees—his euphonious name is Carie-Carie—has sworn to drive the English into the sea, and that he is expected to head the reinforcements asked for by his commander-in-chief. Whether these reinforcements have arrived or not



we do not know; but the invaders on the 7th April resumed the offensive. The Fantees had in the meantime been reinforced, and were encouraged by the presence of 120 of the Houssa police, under Lieutenant Hopkins, who had been tardily empowered to afford them substantial aid. A battle which lasted six hours took place, the Houssas fighting gallantly and losing two men killed and fourteen wounded. The Ashantees, however, gained the day, and Lieutenant Hopkins fell back with his detachment to the coast. The Ashantees must have bought their triumph dearly, for not till the 14th did they again engage the beaten, but still stubborn, Fantees. On this occasion the fight lasted fourteen hours, at the end of which time the Fantees were completely routed.

The first battle was fought at a spot about seventeen miles from Cape Coast Castle; the second action took place apparently at the same place, but the scene of the last engagement was no doubt nearer to Cape Coast Castle. At all events, it is said that the whole country is now in the hands of the invaders, and that we cannot be said to hold an acre of ground save what is commanded by the fire from the forts on the coast. The fortifications of Cape Coast Castle consist of an earthen work adjoining the road which leads to the town, a strong masonry fort on the shore, and a martello tower in which is kept the ammunition of the garrison. Unfortunately this tower is isolated, and the fort itself is overlooked at a distance of 300 or 400 yards by some high hills. Cape Coast Castle is, however, sufficiently strong both as regards fortifications and garrison to defy the dusky warrior, who is as unlikely to fulfil his oath as was his predecessor Quacoi Duah, who vowed in 1863 to cut off the Governor's head, and didn't. The outlying settlements are in a somewhat critical condition, their works being out of repair, ammunition being short, and the garrisons weak. Accra, for instance,

was a short time ago only occupied by thirty negroes of a West Indian regiment, without an officer. It is to be hoped that the reinforcements which have been despatched from Sierra Leone and Lagos will be employed to strengthen these forts, for there seems to be no intention of carrying on any operations in the open field. The force at the disposal of the Governor consists of three men-of-war or gunboats, and 840 armed police, black soldiers and volunteers. Had it been desired, ten times that number might have been raised from among the Fantees, who, if well armed and led by Englishmen, would probably fight well. Fighting would however interfere with the moral force policy which seems to be in favour. Besides, Lord Kimberley denies that we are under any obligation to protect the protected tribes. It is not, he lately said, British, but only British-protected, territory which has been violated, and we have never pretended to defend it against aggression in the same way as British territory. To unsophisticated minds it would seem that here is a distinction without a difference, and that the meaning of protection is to defend the protected against aggression. To calm any apprehension that might be felt, he asserted that the Ashantees, who numbered only 4,000, were at the back of the protected territory. Information obtained from non-official sources gave the number at 30,000 in one body, and, indeed it is now officially admitted that the Colonial Office has been misinformed, and that the enemy numbers from 30,000 to 40,000 men. Convinced at last that we have to deal with no mere raid, but with a very substantial and formidable invasion, Lord Kimberley has sent out in hot haste a rocket battery and some marines. It is probable, however, that these reinforcements will arrive somewhat late, for by this time the rainy season has commenced and operations in the field must have perforce come to an end.

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**DILIGENT IN BUSINESS.**—A man industrious in his calling, if without the fear of God, becomes a drudge to worldly ends; vexed when disappointed, overjoyed in success. Mingle but the fear of God with business, it will not abate a man's industry, but sweeten it; if he prosper, he is thankful to

God that gives him power to get wealth; if he miscarry, he is patient under the will and dispensation of the God he fears. It turns the very employment of his calling to a kind of religious duty and exercise of his religion, without damage or detriment to it.

Sir Matthew Hale.